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EGM 131

June 2000
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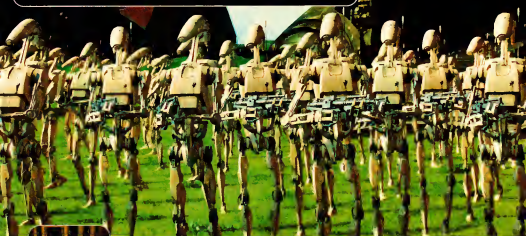
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LETTERS

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Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your internet weirdness... or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

multiple times what any console would. There are some who complain about the PS2's high price, but a high-quality PC costs even more!

Because of its multi-purposeness, the PC also has an astoundingly high rate of CRASHING! Whose PC has never crashed on them when they were doing nothing wrong?? Now, whose N64 has never frozen/crashed on them??

Another reason many people go to the PC is because of its online gaming capabilities. Once the Dreamcast and PS2 perfect their online gaming strategies, this should no longer be such an advantage.

The MOST annoying quality of PC gaming is the intense need to upgrade your hardware monthly. With console gaming, all hardware upgrades of any kind are purely optional. The only upgrades that are needed to play the new games are buying the new systems. These do not become outdated nearly as quickly. Look at the Game Boy!!! It's still here!! They're still making games for it! PCs from the Game Boy days are used as paperweights now!

I rest my case. I sincerely hope that console gaming prevails in the end!

Brandon Madsen
Bloomington, MN

Your argument is valid...and probably reflects the thinking behind Microsoft's X-Box too. The PC market

is going to change over the next few years...just you watch. There will be a lot more machines that do specific tasks, and a lot less emphasis on a big box full of goodies that has a fair crack at doing everything. Soon you'll have a console, a host of portable devices, Web access in your car and even an iFridge (or whatever they end up calling them).

Lackluster Video (Games)

First off, EGM is the only mag I read regularly as well as subscribe to. It is (in my humble opinion) the only one that represents all sides fairly, and gives all games a fair inspection when rated. Now down to business.

I find it disturbing that games are losing originality. Often times I see another lackluster sequel to some 3D platform game (need I even say the name Tomb Raider?) or some cheesy ripoff of an original title (the billions of snowboarding games that all play the same). I am tired of seeing the same old, same old.

Thank God for those game designers who aren't afraid to take a risk and try to create a new genre or original title, and the publishers who risk money to distribute them. Games like Pop'n Music 2 and Project Seaman look to be amazing and fresh titles with creative

"Whose PC has never crashed on them when they were doing nothing wrong? Now, whose N64 has never frozen/crashed on them?"

Question of the Moment

What Do You Want In An Online Game?

Anything but the usual crap, or in other words: Tomb Raider or Twisted Metal.

Hostilis@concentric.net

As a SURVIVOR of a game called Everquest (aka EverCrack), I hope online games don't become more in-depth and controlling as Everquest was. I call these games "real life destroyers." Warning to everyone: It can happen to you.

kwes977@earthlink.net

I don't want any online games. They are the downfall of the hardcore gaming exp. chwy45@clinet.net

Two words, POKEMON...or is that one word? Either way, it is the PERFECT game for online...

denotecomear@hotmail.com

Absolutely nothing, if Single-player games go the way of the dinosaur, I will find a new hobby.

GLB.TUCK@worldnet.att.net

Final Fantasy XII!!

bit.kitguy@psak.net

Voice chat, like Roger Wilco for the PC. Now that Sega is coming out with the microphone (with the camera), we can only hope...

pdcarney@worldspy.net

I want to see Final Fantasy games online in America. If Japan can do it, we can too. More multiplayer games would be nice also.

mikhail_omega@yahoo.com

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yanam2@hotmail.com

What do I want in online gaming? Baby, it's already official, Fantasy Star Online & Quake 3 Arena simultaneously putting DC & PC owners head to head! That's a gamer's dream and it's ONLY on SEGA DREAMCAST...It's thinking: Sony, suck on that!

KILIK@worldnet.att.net

Plenty of cream fillin's.

311@bitwisecosystems.com

"Thank God for those game designers who aren't afraid to take a risk and try to create a new genre or original title, and the publishers who risk money to distribute them."

Next Month's Question of the Moment:
Will you sign up for SegoNet and get a free Dreamcast?
Why or why not?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@zd.com with the subject heading: **rebate**

DESERT ISLAND GAMES

Five Games You Couldn't Do Without

If you were stuck on a desert island and could only have five games with you, which would they be? E-mail us your lists at EGM@zd.com.

Mark the subject line "Desert Island Games."

GoldenEye 007
Tekken 3
Super Mario Kart
Civilization II
Super Black Bass
denyachin@bellsouth.com

Final Fantasy VII
Grand Theft Auto 2
NFL 2K
Harvest Moon (NES)
Metal Gear Solid
ekgrack@worldnet.att.net

Suikoden
Final Fantasy VII
Final Fantasy VIII
Tactics Ogre
Civilization II
matt914861@aol.com

Soul Calibur
Gran Turismo
Sonic Adventure
Gran Turismo 2
Final Fantasy VII
patrick@trish@aol.com

Mario Party
Dead or Alive 2
NFL 2K
SHK vs. Capcom: MOTM
Gran Turismo 2
virtua@gameboy@go.com

RE Code: Veronica
WWF SmackDown!
Resident Evil Nemesis
Final Fantasy VIII
Final Fantasy VII
af8@rich@aol.com



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twists (growing animal-men in a digital water tank anyone?).

Then there are the cases where games add a new twist to an already tried-and-true formula. While THOUSAND ARMS is another RPG, it adds in the low factor, pretty much new to the U.S. I would hope to see more games with dating elements in them, but one can only dream....

You see, I am the consumer. I want quality for my hard-earned cash. I don't understand why companies continue to pump out stale old 3D ripoffs of good games and sequels to once original titles when us consumers grow tired of them. I miss the days of the NES where almost any game was original. And despite the fact that they may look horrendous by today's standards, they still play BETTER than 90% of the games out now. This letter is a plea from the average consumer, to the publishers: Take a chance on games that don't follow the trend. For those Metal Gears and Resident Evils are what make the gaming community what it is today.

Brian Breed
brian.breed@juno.com

Even in the days of the NES there were dozens of "me too" games. But you bring up a good point—companies need to take chances on originality. As consumers, you have the power. If you buy cookie-cutter games, that's what you're going to get more of. If you support originality, that's what you'll get more of. Companies aren't going to produce more of what doesn't make money. Power to the people—now where the hell is Vib-Ribbon?

Don't Bogart That Racing Sim

While playing mostly action-oriented video games, I have noticed that a kind of video gamer's high comes over me. Much like a runner's high, it's that moment when you stop thinking about playing. Your eyes may get crossed and your brain shuts down. It feels like your fingers have a mind of their own and they play the game much better than

SHORTS

The very nature of the EGM letters here!

What do the Japanese symbols stand for in FFXIII when Odin attacks?

John Spinella

Loosely translated, they mean "Get a life."

You think there are a lot of systems that have 2 in them, what about 64? Commodore 64, Amiga 64, Nintendo 64, and I'm pretty sure there are a few more

tsipip@earthlink.net

No, we don't think about this at all.

LOL...BUTT_YUM ...

Eric Schoen
eschoen@stlouis.com

...ah, so thanks, Eric.

your own brain could have ever done. I have noticed this feeling in mostly first-person shooters and racing games. Games that require you to think (Metal Gear Solid) keep your brain awake and you never get the video gamer's high. Then there are games that are more action than anything else (Medal of Honor and GoldenEye). Those types often give me the video gamer's high. I was wondering if the good people at EGM have ever experienced this great feeling of video gamer's high.

Nicholas DiQuattro
San Bruno, CA

Totally. There's more than one way to get high, baby

Sequel Seeker

Looking back through my vast collection of games, I started to think

of which ones I loved but haven't seen a good sequel to. With all the new systems out or coming out, like Dreamcast, PlayStation2 and Dolphin, I would like to see these sequels:

1. Splatter House (Namco)
2. Altered Beast (Sega)
3. Shinobi (Sega)
4. Ninja Gaiden (Tecmo)
5. Chakan the Forever Man
6. A good Castlevania game
7. Guardian Legends (Nintendo)
8. Streets of Rage
9. Demon Crest (Capcom)
10. Blaster Master

Jason Siler
Chicago, IL

You can play a Blaster Master sequel on your Game Boy Color right now, and a Dreamcast update to Chakan is in the works.

LETTER ART

WINNER Shane Fernald
Baltimore, MD

Congratulations, your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.



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(All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned)

Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys...better luck next time. Feel free to e-mail us artwork as well. More of our messages are e-mails these days—so don't miss out!



Jennifer Arielano
San Bernardino, CA



Chao Sen Chen (again!)
Brooklyn, NY



Nick Fullmer
Berkley, CA

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by *Method Man*



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Press Start The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

Sega Takes Spring TGS By Default



The usual excitement of the twice-yearly Tokyo Game Show was replaced this year by gamers and journalists scratching their heads. With PlayStation2 newly released, we expected to see dozens of new titles for it—at least from Sony itself. But Sony was unusually quiet, showing off three already-released games (Fantasia on and IQ Remix on PS2 and the Japanese Spyro 2 for PS) and the average PS2 music puzzler TVDI.

So if Sony wasn't showing anything, surely Square would have a playable Final Fantasy IX demo on show. Alas, Square's booth was Final Fantasy-less except for short teaser videos showing little new of the game. Instead, the company focused on its PS2 sports games (baseball, wrestling) and the already-released Driving Emotion Type-S). FFX is close enough to its July release that something more could have and should have been shown to at least generate a little excitement.

None of the other publishers had any surprises either. Namco, Konami, Tecmo, Enix—nothing. Konami's booth was filled with the latest versions of the company's music games. But how many times can you repackage the same game with different music? If you're an N64 owner you have even less to be excited about in Japan. You could count the number of N64 games at TGS on one hand. Of them, only Bio Hazard Zero (Resident Evil Zero in the U.S.) was worth looking at, but it's still early on in development.

The only real excitement being generated at the show was at Sega's booth. They had at least a dozen new titles, with Phantasy Star Online, Eternal Arcadia and Grandia II leading the pack into the neglected RPG genre on the DC. Other impressive games shown at Sega's booth included Jet Set Radio, Samba De Amigo, Metropolis Street Racer, Napple Tale and Rent A Hero No. 1. But is it too late for the Japanese

gaming audience to care?

While the DC market is growing in the U.S., in Japan the PlayStation2's release has caused DC sales to suffer. While there were plenty of Dreamcast titles to get excited about at Tokyo Game Show, looking at the sales numbers, Seaman is still the best-selling DC game in Japan to date over titles like Sonic and Soul Calibur.

Whether the unexciting spring TGS was merely a symptom of E3's prominence as the place to debut new product or a sign that there's just nothing new coming to Japan in the next six months is anyone's guess. Perhaps it's a little bit of both. Attendance at this year's show dropped for the first time in the show's history—30,000 less people attended this show than the last, which was the record-breaking PS2 debut.

Check out this issue's Previews section for looks at the big games of TGS and come on back next issue for the first news from E3. 🐉

We asked Inafune what his favorite character in the Mega Man series is. He told us, "Elecman from the first Mega Man. It was the first boss character that I designed. I was inspired by American comics for his helmet, which kinda looks like Wolverine's. But it's not considered as good looking in Japan."



EGM Talks With the Man Behind Mega Man

We recently had a chance to sit down and talk with Capcom's Keiji Inafune, creator of the Mega Man series. In his 12 years at Capcom he has worked on games like Mega Man, Mega Man X, Mega Man Legends, Resident Evil 4 (as producer) and the NES classics DuckTales and Chip 'n' Dale's Rescue Rangers. He's currently hard at work on Mega Man Legends 2 (PS) and Onimusha: Warlords (PS2). Here's what was said:

EGM: Will there be another 2D Mega Man game in the future?

Keiji Inafune: I can't say anything about that right now, but we are thinking about doing it.

EGM: How did the concept of Mega Man first come up?

KI: We wanted to create a very simple action game that had the elements of janken (rock-paper-scissors). That was the plan for the original game—and that certain boss characters have a weak point and are vulnerable to certain weapons. And actually, we originally developed Rockman (Mega Man's Japanese name) as an arcade game, because we thought that players in arcades will want to see all the different stages if you offer them

six stages they can choose to start with. They'll put in more coins that way. But the plan backfired, because the arcade division didn't like it. So that's why we changed it to the NES. That's how it started. I finished the first Mega Man and brought it to the sales department, they asked, "Can a game like this sell?" But when it was released, it sold out in three days and they had to reorder.

EGM: Why was the decision made to go from the Mega Man games to X?

KI: It was during the transition from NES to Super NES, so I wanted to make something new for the Super NES. I created the basic setting and placed Mega Man X 100 years after the original Mega Man. I actually talked to other people in R&D about the ideas I had and got their opinions if the ideas I had were good or bad. If I didn't like it then I changed it.

EGM: Where did Rockman get his name from, and does it mean anything?

KI: When people hear the word "rock" in Japan, they think of rock music instead of a stone. Since he is Rockman, someone suggested that his partner's name should be Roll—as in rock 'n' roll.

EGM: So what do you think of the name Mega Man?

KI: I laughed when I first heard the name Mega Man. It doesn't sound very good in Japanese.

EGM: Are you just working on Mega Man Legends 2 and Onimusha: Warlords now?

KI: And two other secret projects (for a total of four).

EGM: Has anything in Onimusha changed when development was switched from PlayStation to PlayStation 2?

KI: The reason why the game shifted from PS to PS2 was that many more things are possible on the PS2. As a developer, when I get better hardware I want to develop for it right away. When we made the decision, the game was half done, so it was a very tough decision. But we wanted to do something much better and much better-looking. As for the changes between...the original PS game was supposed to start at night and end in the morning. But for PS2 it starts in



Inafune-san is currently working on Onimusha: Warlords (above) and Mega Man Legends 2 (below).



early evening—dusk. The biggest difference is the character animation. In the PS version it was 30 FPS, and now it's 60 FPS. You can express little details on PS2 not possible on the older hardware.

EGM: Was there any talk of using real-time backgrounds over prerendered for Onimusha: Warlords?

KI: We are still talking about that now, actually. But our ultimate goal on this product is to achieve the highest quality look on PlayStation2 this year. We use 10,000 polygons per character and it's impossible to use that many polys per character and do detailed real-time backgrounds on the current PS2 hardware. As a creator, I wanted to go for all 3D because of the technology. But we needed to sacrifice something, so we went with more detailed characters.

EGM: Can you say if the Game Boy Advance game you're working on is a Rockman title?

KI: That's a secret, but I can say that it's a game designed for kids.

EGM: Is there any chance Onimusha will come to another system, like DC or PC?

KI: There is a possibility for Dolphin or X-Box, but it would be impossible to bring the game to Dreamcast as it is now.

The creator is attacked by his creation—Capcom's Keiji Inafune gets assaulted by a Servbot, one of the characters introduced in the Mega Man Legends series.





PRESS
START

BANJO PLUCKIN'

Here are the latest few screens of *Rare's* sequel to *Banjo-Kazooie*, appropriately named *Banjo-Tooie*. The game's set to make its public debut at E3, and—may we say—it already looks better than *DK64*.



Everything You Always Wanted to Know About X-Box

Q: First, what is it?

A: X-Box is a game console built from custom—although conventional—PC hardware that runs off a hacked-down version of Microsoft's Windows 2000 operating system. That said, Microsoft is going out of its way to convince us this thing won't look, act or play anything like a PC. "This is not simply taking your PC experience and putting it onto a new device," Bill Gates said. "We're talking about a device here that has no boot time, no software installation; what we're talking about here is a real console."

Q: When will it come out?

A: The system will launch simultaneously in the U.S., Japan and Europe in fall 2001.

Q: How much will it cost?

A: Microsoft hasn't announced a specific price, although Ed Fries, general manager of Microsoft's games division, said, "We understand how console prices work. We know what price points matter." *EGW* expects it will launch for \$299 or less.

Q: Who's making games for the X-Box?

A: So far, Konami, Midway, Eidos, Capcom, Acclaim, Infogrames, Enix, Activision, Rockstar Games, THQ, Sierra, Lionhead Studios, Hasbro Interactive, Universal Interactive, Koel, Titus, Ubi Soft, Kallisto, Hudson and Bungie have all jumped on board to develop X-Box titles (expect *Ready 2 Rumble 2*, a *Rayman* game and some Acclaim titles at launch). Namco, Electronic Arts and Fox Interactive have stated they're excited about the system.

Q: Can I play PC games on my X-Box?

A: No. Like any console, it's a closed system.

Q: Can I play DVDs on X-Box?

A: Yep. The X-Box has a 4-speed DVD-ROM drive, and you won't need DVD software on a memory card like you do with the PS2.

Q: Can I go online with my X-Box?

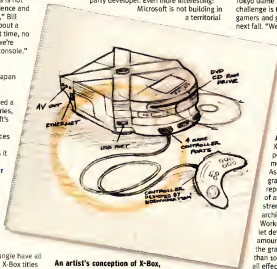
A: Yes. As long as you have a cable modem, DSL line or other broadband connection, you can plug it into your X-Box's ethernet port and hit the Net as soon as you unpack your system (it will come with a browser of some sort). Or you can buy the 56K modem, which'll ship separately, and connect the old-fashioned way.

Q: What kind of games will hit the X-Box?

A: The easy answer here is PC ports, and lots of them. The system's OS and conventional architecture make it a snap for PC developers to port their games over. But Microsoft

stresses that this machine won't be a dumping ground for PC ports. In fact, more than 550 people are working on games now at Microsoft, and a considerable percentage of those folks are developing X-Box-only titles. Rumor has it Microsoft will beef up its first-party support by buying a big-name third-party developer. Even more interesting:

Microsoft is not building in a territorial



An artist's conception of X-Box, had it been conceived in a Seattle coffee shop (above), and Microsoft's ad that appeared on the show guide for the Tokyo Game Show (below).

lock-out, so you'll be able to play games

shipped in Japan and Europe just as easily as American releases.

Q: Will the X-Box be upgradable like a PC?

A: No. Microsoft wants the X-Box to remain a stable, unchanging system for the next five years, until the release of *X-Box 2*. "We want to build the ultimate platform from the start and leave it out there as long as we can," Fries said. That's a good thing—developers won't have to code for a "moving target" like they do with PC games.

Q: Can X-Box succeed in Japan?

A: History shows that American consoles just don't flourish in Japan. Microsoft knows this. It's been trying to woo Japanese developers since last fall and has been promoting the system in Japan. (Microsoft even held an X-Box Developer's Conference on the first day of the Tokyo Game Show.) Microsoft's other main challenge is to hype X-Box among Japanese gamers and get the machine in their stores next fall. "We've got 18 months now to finish

building the sales and marketing infrastructure," said Robert Bach, vice president of Microsoft's home and retail division. "Microsoft has a huge start here. We've done retail sales and marketing for a long time, but we do have to tune it for the console business."

Q: How much more powerful is the X-Box than PlayStation?

A: A quick look at the stats shows X-Box is at least three times more powerful than PS2, and probably more like five times as powerful. Aside from its stellar nVidia graphics processor (which is reportedly three generations ahead of anything out now), the system's strengths lie in its unified memory architecture and internal hard drive. Working together, the RAM and drive let developers spit out massive amounts of high-quality textures, while the graphics processor pumps more than 100 million polygons a second with all effects turned on. "People will have to get used to the concept of going from 15 million or 20 million polygons per second to 2 million polygons per frame," Microsoft tech guru Seamus Blackley told us. To be fair to Sony, the PS2 will be capable of comparable feats once developers get the hang of the hardware.

Q: What's the deal with the X-Box's hard drive?

A: The drive acts as a scratch disk for developers, a place to spool texture and other game information and then dump it into memory. X-Box users won't be able to access it like they can with their PC hard drives. They won't have to install games on it. For the most part, the hard drive will be invisible to X-Box gamers. The system will ship with an 8-megabyte memory card to hold game saves and customized game data.



"In Shenmue 1 we'd have five or six characters displayed at once, about six or seven at max on one screen. In Shenmue 2 we'll have up to 50 characters, on the same hardware. That's due to the change of algorithm on the software."

Yu Suzuki, the man behind Sega's multimillion-dollar epic DC game Shenmue, on the advances to be seen in its sequel



TIDBITS

TGS Tidbits...



Shown above is Ascli's special clip-on surfboard for its PS2 title *Surfroid* which is early in development. And tucked away in the Kid's Corner area of the Tokyo Game Show was *Dance Dance Revolution*

GB, complete with a clip-on dancing controller (shown above).

...Everything Else

Fox Interactive will bring *The Simpsons* back to the game screen on PlayStation in *Simpsons Wrestling*, being developed by Big Ape (Herc's Adventures, Star Wars Episode One)...**Namco will release**

Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness on the PlayStation this fall. It's a 3D maze/platform-style game that looks a little like last fall's Pac-Man

World...Mega Man 64 (N64) and Mega Man X (GB) are just around the corner and will be shown at E3...BAM Entertainment will publish Transformers Beast Wars Transmetals on N64, but it will only be available (at least initially) for rental at Blockbuster Video locations nationwide beginning in May...The Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences will present its yearly Hall of Fame award to Hironobu Sakaguchi, president of Square USA and creator of the Final Fantasy series, at the Academy's awards presentation during E3...

Bio Hazard 3 (Resident Evil 3 Nemesis in the U.S.) is coming to the PC in Japan this June. The game will feature an Internet ranking mode and the Mercenaries mini-game available right from the beginning...THQ has taken a minority stake in Japanese developer Yuke's (responsible for such games as WWF SmackDown!) and the Japanese Toukon (Retsuden) for future PS and PS2 games.



Capcom's menagerie (top), a Rival Schools fan (middle left), one of Namco's babes (middle right), Jet Set Radio girls (bottom left) and photographers taking pictures of dressed-up fans (bottom right).



You dance like a white guy. And now the universe depends on your sorry rhythm. Don't freak space cadet. Cosmic diva Ulala will show you some fly moves. Before long you'll be rump shakin'-it against an alien posse. But don't get too funky or they'll light you up like a Christmas tree. Visit spacechannel5.com

*No Nerobans are actually harmed in this game. Their little souls are returned to the planet Mardis where they are recycled and go on to live happy, productive lives.



PRESS
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DEVELOPER PROFILE

Black Box

Location: Vancouver, B.C., Canada
Web Site: www.blackboxgames.com
of employees: 35



Recent projects: NHL:K (Dreamcast)

The most challenging thing about making a sports game today is: Satisfying the most demanding of game players, including ourselves.

The hardest thing(s) from real hockey to re-create in a game is: That nasty smell on your hands you get from sweaty hockey gloves!

The thing we're most excited about work on Dreamcast is: Being able to do things on a home platform that seemed inconceivable a few short years ago.

During breaks from late-night programming sessions, we: Watch hockey, spin some vinyl, snowboard, rock climb and deplete Canada's beer resources.

Our favorite game to play in the office (not by us) is: Soul Calibur (Crazy Taxi is a close second).

Favorite snack food(s): Coca-Cola, potato chips and Domino's Pizza.

Music that inspires us around the office: The Artist Formerly Known as Prince, KISS, Frank Sinatra, Lemmy Krawitz, The Tragically Hip, The Cure, Chantal Kreviazuk, Amanda Marshall, heaps of club music, Beck, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Whitesnake, AC/DC, Eric Clapton, The Beatles

Story behind our name: We just thought it sounded cool. Simple as that.

Favorite catchphrase or slogan: "That is so PORN!"

"Representing a Superhero that can fight, wall-crawl, web-swing and web-up bad guys is going to be a challenge on almost any system."

—Chad Findley, lead designer on Spider-Man



Spidey Team Talks About Spidey, the Future

It's been a while since we checked up with the team at Neversoft finishing up Activision's Spider-Man game. So we asked Joel Jewett (Neversoft President), Chad Findley (Spider-Man Lead Designer) and Kevin Mulhall (Spider-Man Producer) a few questions about Spidey and got their thoughts on the future of console gaming. Here's what they had to say:

EGM: What kind of reactions to Spider-Man have you gotten from the Spider-Man demo on the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine disc?

Kevin Mulhall: Overall, the response has been very positive! We've received praise for capturing the essence of Spider-Man in a 3D environment, which has been one of the hardest and most time-consuming aspects of the game's development. We've also received hundreds of requests from Spider-Man fans of all of the features and characters they would like to see. Hopefully, we'll be able to please everyone with what we've selected.

EGM: What are your thoughts on PlayStation2 and X-Box?

Joel Jewett: The simple fact that there is all this new technology just waiting for us to make games on is a very exciting thing indeed. The fact that two of the world's most powerful industry corporations are going to be able to bring these new machines into everyone's living rooms, puts game developers in a great position. Therefore, I don't really spend a ton of my time speculating on who will do what or who will win the battle. I just focus on making

the best games we can and on preparing ourselves for the future. That is pretty much where the fun is for all of us...making games.

EGM: Do you think console developers can get excited about X-Box?

CF: I'm pretty excited about the X-Box—it is a very fast and powerful system with a fairly simple architecture as well as a lot of integral peripherals—and as far as being merely a PC in a big X-shaped box, it's not really the same. With the X-Box we can design and program for just the one setup—no additional Video Cards, no worries about extra memory, no processor variations—just one 'scream's' system to focus on. But, we still have to wait to see the box...

EGM: What do you see happening in the next three years in the console business?

CF: I really think that each of the big four have great things to look forward to as well as some things to worry about. There are so many variables and everybody's got a few good cards and a couple of hurdles. A lot of it will center around what the developers want to do.

KM: That's a tough one to call. You now have two industry veterans and two huge powerhouses bringing machines to the next generation lineup. That's four completely distinct machines, with four distinct companies at the helm. I think it will be extremely interesting to not only see what developers do, but see how the consumer market handles the choices they will have to make on which machine they should purchase over another.

The Neversoft Spider-Man Team





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Castlevania, Resident Evil Get Canned

Eager to get your bloody hands on the DC Castlevania from Konami or the Game Boy Resident Evil from Capcom? Looks like you'll be waiting...indefinitely. Both games are the victims of cancellation. Resident Evil got the axe because it wasn't up to Capcom's standards. As for the DC Castlevania—no one's saying for sure, but it wasn't looking good.

IMPORT CALENDAR

Samba De Amigo

Import Pick of the Month: Sega's DC music game, Samba De Amigo.

PlayStation

April Breath of Fire IV, Capcom (RPG)
5/18 Dance Dance Revolution 3rd Mix, Konami (Music)

Dreamcast

4/27 Samba De Amigo, Sega (Music)
4/27 Power Stone 2, Capcom (Fighting)
5/25 Rent A Hero No. 1, Sega (Action)
5/25 Sakura Taisen, Sega (Strategy RPG)

PlayStation2

4/27 Evergrace, From Software (Action RPG)

Nintendo 64

4/27 Legend of Zelda: Mask of Majora, Nintendo (Action RPG)

Nintendo 64DD

April F-Zero X Expansion Kit, Nintendo (Racing)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.

JAPAN TOP 10

- 1** Kirby's Dreamland 64
Nintendo
- 2** Wario Land 3
Nintendo
- 3** Muscle Ranking Vol. 2
Konami
- 4** World Stadium 4
Konami
- 5** Ridge Racer V
Konami
- 6** The King of Fighters '99
SNK
- 7** Golf Paradise
Taito Soft
- 8** Pocket Monsters Gold/Silver
Nintendo
- 9** Kessen
Koei
- 10** NBA 2K
Sega

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 3/26/2000

Sony Sheds Light on Broadband Plans

Sony has never been secretive about its ambitious plans for the PlayStation2's broadband network. We know it'll go online next year. We know it'll let you connect—via the Internet—to a number of specialized servers that'll stream digital movies, audio and other content to your console (Sony's finding partners to provide this content right now). And we know standard Web browsing is probably the last thing you'll do with your PS2, since Sony's gearing its network to the delivery of flashier online stuff.

But at the recent Game Developers Conference, Phil Harrison, SCEA vice president of R&D and third-party relations, clued us in on what this flashier stuff might be—as well as how you'll access it with your PlayStation2 early next year. "The broadband adapter will be 100-megabit ethernet, with a very high-capacity hard-disk drive, connected by a PCMCIA port on the PlayStation2 system," he said (although he gave no details about the adapter's price or launch date). "Connected to the network will be a number of servers which will deliver discreet products and services into the home via the PlayStation2."

Harrison said, as an example, "Because the PlayStation2 is backwardly compatible...it's very straightforward for us to launch us a server that contains all those PlayStation titles ever made. And perhaps for titles that are no longer on the shelf, we can see a business model and a market that'll exploit these titles well into the future."

Harrison told us to expect innovations far beyond standard stuff like downloadable demos. Watch for hybrid games, for instance, which reside partly on disc, partly on the network. He told us to imagine dynamic advertising: stadium banners in a sports game, for example, could display ads for different real-life products every time you play. Even gaming events following the pay-per-view TV model are possible on the PS2 network. "How about a pay-per-play wrestling event, where the last man standing out of 100 people

wins money?" Harrison asked.

Yet he seemed most keenly interested in seeing episodic games—games you buy and download in installments—bloom on the broadband network. And several developers are working on this very concept already. "The idea behind this is we deliver games in smaller chunks and have them build on one another over a period of time," said industry veteran Jim Perkins, president and CEO of Web Corp, which will publish episodic games for the PS2, X-Box and PC. "The first episode is free, and any episode after that is anywhere from \$3 to \$6 per episode."



The PS2's PCMCIA port is eventually where all the information will flow—from downloadable demos to episodic games.

Perkins is working with several developers, including Paradox, Sunstorm and Imagine Engine, to build RPGs, action games, racing titles, browser games—even smaller games you can download to your cell phone. So imagine an RPG in which you pay to download a new mini-quest every month, or a racing game that has you visiting a Web site every few weeks to download another track. That's what episodic games are all about, and you'll definitely see it on the PlayStation2 and X-Box. "[Developers] could just build the engine and leave it to other people to make the story and characters," Harrison said. "The game could go on forever."

Final Cola Fantasy

Square has teamed up with Coca-Cola in Japan to promote the next game in the Final Fantasy series. The first commercial, starring the FFIX characters as they experience the "Enjoy!" of Coca-Cola (or so reads the press information), began airing in Japan in early April. Consumers who buy Coca-Cola products can get promo items like Final Fantasy series trading cards, small plastic figures and more.



COUNTDOWN



GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR INNER PSYCHOPATH

And you better learn fast. Because you're Keith Snyder, bodyguard, trapped in the Desert Moon Hotel when all the patrons are turned into vampires. Your job... find out why and destroy a few million nasty vampires in the process. There is a myriad of environments, awesome weapons and challenging puzzles to keep you on the edge of your seat. You can even pick your blood type and play as a human or vampire. Videogames.com said, "If you're looking for an RE-style game with a twist this might be your best move." So get moving, before you become...uuhhh...dead meat.

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MIRA SWISH



JULES DOORS



CLAUDIA SWISH





WILDEST GAME CONCEPT EVER

We thought we'd seen everything with Choznik. But boy, were we wrong. Here's a shot of *Geong Ga Boong Ga*, an arcade game by Korean manufacturer Taff System and NTS Soft. The object is to ram the hand-shaped-with-pointing-index-finger controller into the "butt" to get a reaction from computer-generated characters on-screen. The harder you do it, the odder the reaction. You get one shot and, like a slot machine, numbers scroll through which determine your prize (which falls out of a slot on the left side).



Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Next month should be a gossip frenzy as all the gossipy old women in the games industry get together in the various bars in downtown Los Angeles, get drunk, and spill the beans on what they've been working on and what they've heard person x has been doing with person y. It's all good fun, and we take notes while they spew BS at each other.

Rumor The original PlayStation is soon to be replaced by a new, smaller, cheaper unit which could well be marketed under the name "My First PlayStation." This will be how Sony differentiates the two markets that it will soon be selling machines to.

Truth All production has temporarily stopped on PS1 production to accommodate the demand for PS2. We've learned from a number of sources that Sony is considering consolidating much of the technology within the original PlayStation (as already exemplified by the new I/O port-less PlayStations) to make it cheaper to manufacture. While doing this, an opportunity could be taken to introduce a differently designed, kid-friendly PlayStation. Expect an announcement of some sort within the next month. Let's just hope it's not too garish and ugly.

Rumor The Legacy of Kain series is set to expand considerably over the next year. *Soul Reaver 2* is expected to be revealed over the next few months, and we've also heard that the team is piecing together *Blood Omen 2*. Er...hello? *Blood Omen 2*? Wasn't *Soul Reaver* the sequel to *Blood Omen*? We hear now that the *Blood Omen* story line could well take the "legend" in a different direction picking up at Kain's "decision

point" at the end of the first game. The *Soul Reaver* games assume that Kain's decision was to remain a vampire and develop down the "dark side" and, from what little we've heard, we're assuming that the *Blood Omen* stories will assume otherwise.

Truth Nothing has been officially confirmed yet, but we'll be in a position to find out more next month.

Rumor *Sonic Adventure 2*'s in development and is coming along splendidly, but won't show up in stores until 2003.

Truth The Q's inside sources have let spill that *Sonic Adventure 2* is indeed in development, and some of the work is being handled in the U.S. by the portion of Sonic Team that relocated to San Francisco during the localization of the first DC Sonic. And just like the Genesis *Sonic 2*, it'll have a two-player mode. The Q hears a new look is in store for the blue dude, too...hey Sonic, have you been working out?

Rumor Acclaim's struck a deal with Sega to produce five of Sega's games on PlayStation2. Two of which are *Crazy Taxi* and *Zombie Revenge*. Acclaim will bring Sega's Ferrari 355 to Dreamcast in the U.S.

Truth It's true that Acclaim will bring Ferrari to the U.S. (Acclaim has the Ferrari game license for anything in the U.S.). The two have been in rather serious talks about the PS2, and while everything's still hush-hush, the Q wouldn't be surprised to see *Crazy Taxi* and *Zombie Revenge* on PS2 in the near future. What this says about the Dreamcast's future is anybody's guess. If it's only a handful of titles (and older ones at that), it probably won't sway anyone from droppin' the dough for a DC.

Last-Minute Update

Here are the first shots of LucasArts' *Star Wars: Demolition*, a vehicular combat game coming this fall for PlayStation by Vigilante 8 scribes Luxoflux. Jump into just about any *Star Wars* vehicle, or onto the backs of gun Rancors, and blast your way over alien terrains.



Play Region 1 DVDs on PS2

It wasn't long after the PS2 landed that someone found out how to play Region 1 (U.S.) DVD movies on the Region 2-specific PS2 DVD player software. The codes don't allow you to play all U.S. DVD movies, and sometimes don't let you access features of the discs that normally would be accessible on a regular Region 1 player, but the fix is enough to get DVDphiles excited.

When Sony discovered the bug, they were quick to announce that all new shipments of the PS2 hardware will include updated DVD player software that removes this workaround. These systems began shipping to stores in Japan in early April. SCEI will also distribute the discs to stores that have sold PS2s in Japan so that customers can get the updated version of the DVD player software (why they would do that just to disable this Easter egg, we have no idea).

So how do you do it? The easiest way is to plug a regular PS controller into the first player controller port of the PS2, insert a U.S. DVD, reset the machine, and after the SCEI boot screen fades to black, press and hold "up" on the control pad. You'll get a one-line message in Japanese on the screen if it worked. Press select to get into the DVD menu, select Play, sit back and enjoy the show!





THE
EXTREME
TASTE
OF
Tang
NOW
COMES
IN A
POUCH





PRESS
START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of February, 2000

1 - Pokémon Yellow



This is the first time in recent memory where every major game system on the market is represented in the top five. Of course, it wouldn't be a top five without one or two of Nintendo's Pokémon games, now would it?

	1
8.0	6.0
Chris	Crispin
8.0	6.0
Ché	Shae

2 - Mario Party 2



Nintendo brings Mario and his gang of buddies back to the N64 with a smorgasbord of new boards and addictive and challenging mini-games. Roll the dice and don't get caught by the wily and tyrannical Baby Bowser.

	NEW
7.5	8.0
Shae	Crispin
8.5	9.0
Shawn	Chris

3 - Crazy Taxi



Here at the office, when you hear the Offspring, it's coming from one place—Cy's cube (playing CT, no doubt). In **Sega's Crazy Taxi** you deliver passengers to their destinations as fast as possible, no matter what gets in your way.

	NEW
9.5	9.0
John O	Shawn
9.0	9.0
Sean	Ché

4 - Gran Turismo 2



GT will make the jump to PlayStation2 sometime this year (hopefully), but until then PS owners are getting their fill of **Sony's** real driving simulator. The first GT—now in the Greatest Hits series—is still on the top 20.

	2
10	10
John	Crispin
10	10
Sean	Ché

5 - Pokémon Red



How many years has it been since Nintendo first released this game? Two? At any rate, it's still on here and its popularity doesn't show any sign of slowing (look for Trading Card to show up on here in the next few months).

	6
9.0	8.0
John R	Crispin
8.0	9.0
John O	Sushi

6	Pokémon Blue Nintendo		4
7	NHL 2K Sega		NEW
8	WWF Wrestlemania 2000 THQ		---
9	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater Activision		3
10	Dukes of Hazzard Southpeak Interactive		18

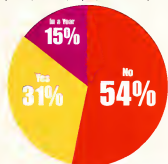
11	Donkey Kong 64 Nintendo		5
12	Pokémon Pinball Nintendo		9
13	Spyro the Dragon SCEA		7
14	Gra Turismo SCEA		8
15	Sled Storm Electronic Arts		---
16	Super Mario Bros. Deluxe Nintendo		---
17	NBA Live 2000 Electronic Arts		16
18	Crash Bandicoot: WARPED SCEA		10
19	Super Smash Bros. Nintendo		14
20	Frogger Hasbro Interactive		15

Source: NPD TRS75 Video Games Service. Call Mary Ann Perica at (516) 435-7345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the EGM staff.

VIDEOGAMES.COM POLL

Too Much of A Good Thing?

Do you think the game industry is strong enough to support four systems (Dreamcast, Dolphin, PS2 and X-Box)?



Source: Videogames.com online poll results for 2/14/00

ONLY WIMPS RACE CARS! REAL MEN TAKE TO THE AIR...

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Coming Soon - June 2000

May

Game Title	Platform	Genre
Viva Capcom	Action	Adventure
All-Star Baseball 2000	Acclaim	Sports
All-Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	Sports
Armadillo F/X Racers	Metro 3D	Racing
Bombman MAX	Vertical Entertainment	Action
Brunswick Pro Pool	Vertical Entertainment	Sports
Croc	THQ	Adventure
Dinosaur	Ubi Soft	Action
Driver	GT Software	Racing
Golf King	Crave Entertainment	Sports
Homes of Night and Magic	3DO	Adventure
International Rally	Koanmi	Racing
ISS Soccer	Koanmi	Sports
Lemmings Revolution	Take 2 Interactive	Puzzle
NASCAR 2000	THQ	Racing
Pro Pool	Activision	Sports
Rally Racing	Koanmi	Racing
Ronald V-Soccer	GT Software	Sports
Titan the Fox	Interplay	Action
Tomb Raider	THQ	Action
Tookler	Midway	Misc.
Totally Angelica	THQ	Action
Trick Boarder	Crave Entertainment	Sports
Triple Play 2000	THQ	Sports
World Land III	Nintendo	Action
Alien	Activision	Sports
Area Football	Midway	Sports
Casual's Palace 2000	Interplay	Misc.
Colony Wars III: Red Sun	Psygnosis	Shooter
Duke Mukeem: Planet of Babes	GT Software	Action
Gekido	Interplay	Action
Grid Session	SCCA	Sports
ISS Pro Revolution	Tommo	Sports
Jeremy McGrath 2000	Acclaim	Racing
Kurt Warner's Arena Football Unleashed	Midway	Sports
Legend of Wings	Square EA	RPG
LEGO Back Riders	LEGO Media	Action
MediEvil II	SCCA	Action
Micro Mania	Codemasters	Action
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	Sports
Mr. Driller	Namco	Puzzle
Nightmare Creatures 2	Koanmi	Action
Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure	Atari	RPG
Rollage Stage 2	Psygnosis	Racing
Stender 2	Capcom	Action
Vagrant Story	Square EA	RPG
Vanishing Point	Acclaim	Racing
Wild Arms 2	SCCA	RPG
4x4 Winds	GT Software	Action
Bombman 64: The Second Attack	Vertical Ent.	Action
Carnagadesen	Titus	Action
Excitebike 64	Nintendo	Racing
Fighter's Destiny 2	Southpeak	Fighting
Looney Tunes Space Race	Infergames	Adventure
Looney Tunes Tax Express	Infergames	Adventure
Perfect Dark	Nintendo	Action
PGA European Tour	Infergames	Sports
4 Wheel Thunder	Midway	Knock
Acetaria	Ubi Soft	Action
Arena Football	Midway	Sports
Casual's Palace 2000	Interplay	Misc.
Dragonair: Call of the Worm	Crave Entertainment	Adventure
ESPN NBA 2 Night	Koanmi	Sports
Giga Wing	Capcom	Shooter
i Spy	Tommo	Action
Nightmare Creatures 2	Koanmi	Action
Off Road	Interplay	Racing
Reignado Racers	Interplay	Racing
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	Fighting

Striver Pro 2000	Infergames
Tech Renacer	Capcom
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Crave Entertainment
Viva Soccer	Interplay

June

Game Title	Platform	Genre
2000 Tunes	Infergames	Misc.
Alice in Wonderland	Nintendo	Adventure
Austin Powers 2	Take 2 Interactive	Action
Crystals	Nintendo	RPG
Dark Angel Anna's Quest	Metro 3D	Adventure
Doug: Quasimodo to the Rescue	Midway	Action
FishEye Golf	Vertical Entertainment	Sports
Hercules	Titus	Action
ISS: Psycho Circus	Take 2 Interactive	Action
Looney Tunes Collector: Alert!	Infergames	Misc.
Lord Banffy's Decet	Vertical Entertainment	RPG
Mex in Black 2	Crave Entertainment	Action
Nico Machines V3	THQ	Racing
MTV Sports: Skateboarding	THQ	Sports
NBA Live 2000	THQ	Sports
Pocket Racers	Interplay	Racing
Re-Volt	Acclaim	Racing
Road to El Dorado	The - Ubi Soft	Action
Tout Drive La Ham	Infergames	Racing
TOCA Tour Racing	Southpeak Interactive	Racing
Tom & Jerry	Mattel	Action
ToonyVania	Ubi Soft	Action
VR Powerbot	Vertical Entertainment	Racing
Wacky Races	Infergames	Racing
WDM: Magical Racing Tour	Eidos	Racing
X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	Action
Play Station	Activision	Action
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Action
Baldur's Gate	Interplay	RPG
Master Master II	Sansoft	Action
Magical Mystery 2	Interplay	Action
Countdown Vampire	Banda!	Action
Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn	Activision	Action
Dragon Valor	Namco-Hemetek	RPG
In Fahrenheit Bass Hunter	Take 2 Interactive	Sports
Iron Soldier 3	Vertical Entertainment	Action
Legend of Dragoon	The - SCCA	RPG
Major League Soccer	Koanmi	Sports
Mortal Kombat Special Forces	Midway	Fighting
Paper Boy	Midway	Action
Peira's Soccer 2000	Remco	Racing
Reel Fishing II	Natsome	Sports
Suburban Elix	Activision	Action
Test Drive Cycles	Infergames	Action
Wacky Races	Infergames	Racing
WTC World World Racing Champ.	Activision	Racing
Blades Brothers 2000	Nintendo	Action
Casual's Palace	Crave Entertainment	Action
Hercules	Titus	Action
Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards	Nintendo	Action
Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers	Infergames	Action
StarCraft 64	Nintendo	Strategy
Street Racer	Midway	Racing
Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse	Metro 3D	Adventure
Bombado Racing	Infergames	Racing
Ecco the Dolphin	Sega	Adventure
ESPN Baseball Tonight	Koanmi	Sports
Far Fighters	Acclaim	Action
Garret Legends	Midway	Action
Legend of the Blades	Ripcord Games	Action
Midway Arcade Flashback	Midway	Action
Silver	Infergames	RPG
Seeth Park Rally	Acclaim	Action

Space Channel 5	Sega	Misc.
Space Invaders	Acclaim	Shooter
Spac Ops: Omega Squad	Ripcord Games	Action
Toy Story 2	Activision	Action
Wacky Races	Infergames	Racing

July

Game Title	Platform	Genre
Barbie Fashion Pack	Mattel	Misc.
Carnivals	Vertical	Action
Perfect Dark	Rare	Action
Poliform Attack	Nintendo	Puzzle
Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue	THQ	Action
Warlock	Nintendo	Strategy
Xena	Titus	Action
Earthworm Jim	Interplay	Adventure
Darkout	Take 2 Interactive	Adventure
Earthworm Jim	Interplay	Action
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue	Working Designs	RPG
Rampage Through Time	Midway	Action
Spindball 2000	Empire	Sports
Threads of Fate	Square EA	Action/RPG
Alice: Chronicles of the First Mage	THQ	RPG
Banjo-Boo	Nintendo	Action
Super Bowling	Tommo	Sports
X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	Action
Deep Fighter	Ubi Soft	Fighting
Ecco the Dolphin	Sega	Adventure
Evolution 2	Ubi Soft	RPG
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	Acclaim	Racing
Marvel vs. Capcom 2	Capcom	Fighting
Metropolis Street Racer	Sega	Racing
Wesley Brewer	Tommo	Action
Vanishing Point	Acclaim	Racing
Virza Tennis	Sega	Sports
World Series Baseball 98	Sega	Sports

August

Game Title	Platform	Genre
Avatar	GT Software	Action
Bowling	Vertical Entertainment	Sports
Carnagadesen 2	Interplay	Action
Donsky King Country 2	Mattel	Action
Dragon Tales	Mattel	Action
Jack Nicklaus Golf	Vertical Entertainment	Sports
Jenny White's Cue Ball	Vertical Entertainment	Sports
Seedie Hydrocross 2000	Vertical Entertainment	Racing
Sydney 2000	Eidos	Sports
T-Rex	Eidos	Action
Chess Cross	Square EA	RPG
ECW: Anarchy Rules	Acclaim	Sports
Kings: Master of Bubbles	Lightweight	Action
Re-Volt 2	Acclaim	Racing
Rock Raiders	LEGO Media	Action
Tenchu 2: Birth of the Assassins	Activision	Action
Open Battle 64	PolC	RPG
Palms SmoCross 2000	Vertical Entertainment	Racing
Armadillo II	Metro 3D	Action
Dr. Super	Sega	Action
Deep Fighter	Ubi Soft	Fighting
ECW: Anarchy Rule	Acclaim	Sports
Power Stone 2	Capcom	Fighting
Quarterback Club 2000	Acclaim	Sports
Saga GT	Sega	Racing
Sydney 2000	Eidos	Sports

electronics

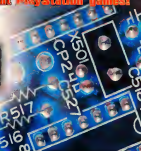
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GOOD EVENING, VIDEO
 GAMERS. I AM HSU
 CHAN, AND I'M MY BROTHER
 CHAN AND TODAY WE ARE
 CONDUCTING A SPECIAL
 STUDY ON AN AREA OF
 GAME CONCERN TO THE
 INDUSTRY: VIDEO GAME
 VIOLENCE.



AS GAME DESIGNERS
 OURSELVES, WE CONSIDER
 IT OUR DUTY TO SEEK OUT
 THE SOLUTION TO THIS
 DISTURBING TENDENCY
 AND TO REMAIN INFORMAL
 TO—



TO AID US IN OUR STUDY, WE HAVE TAKEN
 THE LIBERTY OF READING THIS SPACIOUS
 MEMORANDUM WHICH, FOR THOSE INTERESTED,
 WILL APPEAR IN THE EXPENSE REPORT TO OUR
 PARENT COMPANY UNDER "MISCELLANEOUS"

IT WILL AFFORD OUR RESEARCH A STERILE
 ENVIRONMENT FAR AWAY FROM THE DISTRACTIONS
 OF OTHER EMPLOYEES...
 ALTHOUGH YOU SHOULD NOTE
 THAT THE HALL NEXT DOOR HAS
 BEEN RENTED OUT FOR A SEVERAL WEEK
 CONVENTION SO THERE MIGHT
 GET A LITTLE WEIRD.



THE QUESTION IS: SHOULD WE
 VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA ASPECT
 BEHAVIOR IN ALL CHILDREN?
 ARE GAMES OUTSIDERS
 ONLY IN THE DOMAIN OF THOSE
 WITH A FEW SCREENS LOOSE.



OR COULD IT BE THAT
 WITHIN EVERY CHILD IS A
 PSYCHOTIC, ANYONE
 READY TO BREAK HANDS
 ON ALL WE
 HOLD DEAR.



SECURITY!



LET'S MOVE ON.
 OVER HERE WE HAVE
 THE TESTING GROUNDS,
 AND OUR VOLUNTEER
 TEST SUBJECTS, TWO
 FORTUNATE AMERICAN
 TEENAGERS AVERAGE
 IN EVERY WAY EXCEPT
 THAT THEY ARE
 PRETTY A TAD
 SMOOTHER THAN MOST.
 BUT THEY WE ARE
 WORKING ON THE
 SAFEST NOTICE.



WHEN DO WE
 GET OUR
 FIVE DOLLARS?



THE TESTING PROCESS IS SIMPLIFY
 ITSELF - OUR SUBJECTS WILL PLAY VIDEO
 GAMES FOR A SET AMOUNT OF TIME, THEN
 WHEN THEY ARE FINISHED WE WILL
 OBSERVE THEIR BEHAVIOR.



SUBJECT 4, YOU WILL
 BE PLAYING "MOKO," A
 VIOLENT BOMB LIKE
 THE FUN PLAYS FREELY
 IN OURS, GOODBY
 ALIEN GAMES.



"TINKLE
 PUZZLEBARKLES
 GARDENS OF
 ENLIGHTENED
 BELLIANT"



WOW!
 HOOT!



I'M PLAYING
 WHAT?



GREAT
 BOUNCING
 LEADERGS!
 WORD GAMES
 DO MAKE
 YOU
 VIOLENT?



THIS IS A DISTURBING
 DEVELOPMENT HSU,
 BUT PERHAPS MORE
 CONCERNING IS THE
 REALIZATION THAT THIS
 PROBLEM IS ONE THAT
 CANNOT BE SOLVED
 OR EVEN ANALYZED
 WITHIN LABORATORY
 SETTINGS.



AND IT SEEMS UN-
 USUAL BUT SO
 GAME DESIGNERS, IT
 IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY
 TO ENSURE THAT THE
 CONTENT OF OUR
 GAMES BE DICTATED
 BY OUR OWN
 CALLED
 VALUES,
 AND NOT
 THE BAKER
 HANDS OF
 THE CONSUMER
 PUBLIC.



IS GEEK A
 SACRED VALUE?





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Reel Fishing II builds on the success of Reel Fishing by offering all the extraordinary game play features that made it the most popular PlayStation® game console fishing game, while at the same time set new standards by being the deepest and most realistic fishing simulation to date.

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- Choose from over 500 pieces of tackle
- Four methods of fishing, including Trotting
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real-time battle and status systems



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- 118x 7-Beats
- 118y Wolf Maney's The Jungle Book



WARNING: Previews worked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

Now that we've played the snot out of the Japanese PS2 stuff Chris and Mark brought back from Tokyo Game Show (take a look at our International coverage), we're back to more important things like getting this issue done. Well, that and getting ready for our annual trip to Los Angeles for E3 (lots of gaming, goodies and partying).

For now, we have a butt-load of pre-E3 previews to show you—some of which are looking downright amazing. N64 owners should be pleased with an above-average showing, including: A new Kirby, Conker's BFD, the Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask and more (by the way, we finally review Perfect Dark in Review Crew this month). And of course let's not forget about all of the other high-profile stuff coming to Dreamcast, PlayStation, PlayStation2 and Game Boy Color, from a variety of publishers and developers.

Speaking of which, in addition to the Dreamcast games we've previewed in this month's Preview section, don't forget about all of the exclusive Dreamcast E3 titles blown out in this month's cover feature (starting on page



Who doesn't love Kirby? He may have a cute, spongy pink body, but he isn't afraid to kick ass if need be. Check out the preview on page 76 of Kirby for the N64.

144). In the feature, we dissect all of the goods Dreamcast owners can look forward to in the months to come. Mario Party-esque Sonic Square, frag-happy Quake III, the long-awaited Phantasy Star Online, Jet Set Radio and more are featured.

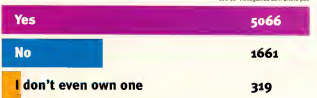
Stay tuned next month when we showcase more games from E3—some with big names attached, but that's all we can say at the moment. The issue after next is post-E3, so we'll be able to pass along all sorts of juicy news and previews directly from the show. No doubt, it'll be a good time. 🍄

TOP 5 Preview Picks

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Soul Reaver 2 | Dreamcast, Fall 2000 |
| 2. Tekken Tag Tournament | PlayStation2, Fall 2000 |
| 3. Power Stone 2 | Dreamcast, August 2000 |
| 4. Kirby 64 | Nintendo 64, Summer 2000 |
| 5. Metal Gear Solid | Game Boy Color, April 2000 |

Will you still play your PlayStation after the U.S. PlayStation2 launch?

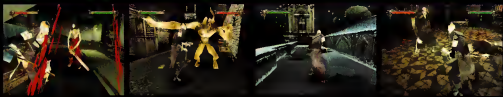
source: vdiogames.com online poll





FE, FI, FO, FUM,

I smell the blood of an Englishman.
Be he alive or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to make my bread.



This is a game of revenge. A dark early 1900s revenge where you'll battle against 20 different creatures using new fighting techniques, combination moves, and fatalities. A revenge that goes deep into 30 game sectors in 8 different worlds including subways, castles, sewers, cities (London/Paris), cemeteries, villages, and underwater.

A gory revenge. An extremely gory revenge.

Soundtrack by Rob Zombie.



Sega Dreamcast



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Whatever it takes to win. You supply the lead foot, we'll supply everything else. This isn't about playing fair. It's about launching missiles, taking weaselly shortcuts, blowing out tires and basically stooping to any level to humiliate your fellow driver. Choose from six speed-crazy delinquent racers. Defile 24 hostile tracks. Plug in the Multi top for a heated foursome. And remember, nice guys finish last.





Capture runaway cat with repairman's help.



Kick computer to make it work.



If only the answers to solving the mysteries of Wild Arms 2 were this easy to find. Instead, you'll face a monumental challenge to discover the secrets that lie within this stunning, yet mysterious 3-D world. A place where fate lies in the balance. Where one courageous, determined hero must sacrifice his heart for peace. Can he use the power of all living Mo forms and save Figasa from the evil forces of Odessa?

Buy drinks to learn gossip.



Look inside barrels



Save before using duplicators.





Use Search System to find money

Conditioner Grease car wash Water.

Player-controlled camera angles

Choose from 3 characters to suit quest!

Battle detailed enemies

Solve brain-racking, action-oriented puzzles

WILD ARMS 2

What legends are made of.

the answers are out there

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PREVIEW

Power Stone 2

Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Players:	1-4
Genre:	Fighting
% Done:	90%
Release:	August 2000
Play On:	Arcade
Web Address:	www.capcom.com
The Deal:	More interactive backgrounds and four-player action.
The Bad:	No ability to block.
And the loot:	The shape of your living room after intense player matches.



Four players hanging out on a rooftop. Looks similar to Super Smash Brothers, doesn't it?

If you can't beat 'em with hand-to-hand combat, might as well hop in a gun turret and blast 'em away.



INTERACTIVE STAGES

Boulderdash!

Power Stone 2 features even more interactive areas than its predecessor. For example, this one stage has you running away from a giant boulder. Yikes!



The original Power Stone was essentially an amalgamation of two genres—fighting and platformer. While the point was to beat up your opponent one-on-one fighter style, there was also a number of platform elements tossed in, such as collecting power-ups, climbing walls, and jumping about the interactive levels. This mix proved to be a success among gamers, so it comes as no surprise that the sequel features an even greater fusion of the two genres.

Picture this: You're in the middle of a battle and all of the sudden, out of nowhere, a gigantic Indiana Jones-style boulder comes crashing into the room. The screen switches to a 2D side-scrolling perspective and you and your opponents must keep running to stay ahead of the rolling boulder. The new objective is now to trip up your opponents so the giant rock will crush them. Doesn't sound like your average fighting game, does it? Another stage allows you to jump in and out of gun turrets found on constantly submerging and resurfacing submarines. There are even vehicles that you can command this time around, including tanks and airplanes. These new levels of background interactivity help increase the action in each



stage as well as make for a new element of strategy. Whereas the first game was more just a race to collect all of the Power Stones, the sequel forces you to also master your environment to become a true champion.

But the most important new feature in the sequel is something that Capcom wanted to include in the original game, but scrapped at the last minute: four-player support. Power Stone 2 allows up to four people to go at it in two-on-two matches. However, to allow all of the characters to appear on screen at once without causing too much confusion, Capcom opted to pull the camera out a bit, so the characters appear a bit smaller this time around. Otherwise, Power Stone 2 appears very similar graphically to the original—which definitely isn't a bad thing. The game still features the same crisp and clean graphics that made the first one such a showcase for the Dreamcast when it launched last year. Running in hi-res at 60fps, with four characters at once all firing weapons, tossing around items, piloting vehicles or launching off their special attacks, PS2 is a sight to behold.

So most of the major changes to the Power Stone formula for the sequel add diversity to the gameplay, which ought to please fans while also adding replay value. It looks like the Dreamcast has yet another title on the way to solidify its reputation as the system of choice for fighting game fans. 🎮



There are over 120 items that you can pick up in Power Stone 2, including 65 weapons.

Which Capcom fighting game series is your favorite?

- Marvel Vs. Capcom - 1847
- Street Fighter Alpha - 1305
- Street Fighter - 1247
- Power Stone - 673



Marvel Vs. Capcom 2

This popular, over-the-top fighter from **Capcom** returns to the Dreamcast in **July**. Unlike its Japanese counterpart, the U.S. *Marvel Vs. Capcom 2* doesn't let you use your DC VMU with the arcade versions of the game to unlock characters, nor does it have online play. Nonetheless, it looks amazing, has a VMU time-release feature for characters, full-on three-on-three battles, over 50 playable characters and more.



Spawn

After playing **Capcom's** incarnation of *Spawn*, it appears that there could actually be a good game devoted to the license. *Spawn* is somewhat reminiscent of *Power Stone*: Combatants square off in 3D arenas, where weapons and maneuverability are key, as is defeating bosses within a set time limit. Since the arcade game uses the Naomi hardware, expect a near-perfect port when *Spawn* hits this **September**.





PREVIEW
GALLERY

TO BE MAINTAINED

Last year when *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* was first released, fans were concerned about the game's rather abrupt ending. "We realized...that we had essentially over-designed the game, and that the epic story we wanted to convey was too ambitious for a single product," Amy Hennig, the producer of *Soul Reaver* told us last year. So when you pop *Soul Reaver 2* into your Dreamcast later this year, you're playing the second act of the originally planned product.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2

Raziel returns to the Dreamcast (and PlayStation) this fall in this latest installment of **Crystal Dynamics/Eidos'** Kain series. This time around you must travel back in time to find Kain and discover the cause for the extinction of the vampire clans and other mysteries of Nosgoth's past. Hordes of new enemies, such as vampire hunters, humans, spectral spirits and demons await your return to the spectral realm.



Evolution 2

Ubi Soft Entertainment is busy translating the sequel to the first-ever Dreamcast RPG, *Evolution 2: Far Off Promise*, for a U.S. release this July.

Mag Launcher is back, and in his quest to become a world-class adventurer, he journeys to the town of Museville to further enhance his reputation as a great treasure hunter.

This follow-up from **Sting** will feature more of the dungeon crawling, turn-based battle action players experienced in the first game. Ubi Soft has made it a point to declare that *Evolution 2* "builds off the strengths of *Evolution 1*." Translated, that means there are both randomly generated and predefined dungeons this time. Hopefully more of the latter than the former, since the first game's mazes got mind-numbingly boring after a while.



Think Twisted. Think Fast.

www.codemasters.com



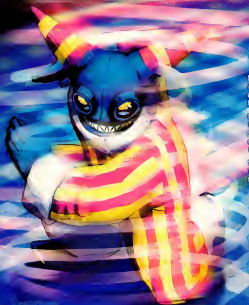
- Up to 8-player online
- 3 single-player modes
- 2 multiplayer modes
- 8 mutated characters
- 16 special weapons
- 32 twisting tracks
- 3D racing action

Reckless, destructive, wicked, aggressive, manic fun!

Micro Maniacs punch, kick, and fight dirty as they run wild through the house.

No principles, no prisoners, just 12 mutant characters devastating anyone and anything that comes between them and winning. It's multiplayer mayhem at its maniacal best.

If you see them coming... Run!



Name: Twister
Age: 23
Weight: 0.95 oz.
Height: 1.9 in.

Speed:

In and out of corners for many years, but shows no visible signs of decline. Very mobile and stable in unusual surroundings.

Special abilities:

To make devastation
Decapitating yo-yos.



MICRO MANIACS™

They're off. And running.

Codemasters™

GENIUS AT PLAY





PREVIEW
GALLERY

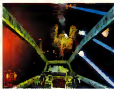
Starlancer

Headed to the DC this **September** from **Crave** is *Starlancer*, a space shooter developed by **Digital Anvil** (soon to be a PC game). Major nations from Earth have formed strategic alliances and are battling against each other (*Alliance* versus *Coalition*) for planetary control of Mars, Earth and other planets across the solar system. It's your job to join the 45th Volunteers Squadron and battle for the planets.



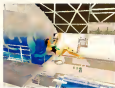
LOOK CLOSER...

Does *Starlancer* look a little *Wing Commander*esque? While we hope this isn't too foreboding for the game, the developer, **Digital Anvil**, was also the same team behind the special effects in the ill-fated *Wing Commander* movie. It was one of the worst science-fiction flicks ever, but at least the visuals weren't too bad, especially when you consider its laughable budget.



Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games

If you don't feel like falling asleep while watching the Olympics on NBC, you can try playing this more interactive version from **Eidos**. The game seems ambitious—you can train your entire Olympic team, dress them in sexy shorts, and then have them compete in 12 different events.



NFL Blitz 2001

Predictably, **Midway** is set to release the latest in their pigskin brawler this fall. Expect a revamped playbook, a more robust editor, new player animations, and tons of new bonuses and codes.



Stupid Invaders

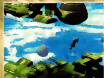
You and your alien pals crash land on Earth, only to be pursued all over the place by an evil doc who collects aliens. This 3D adventure is coming in **September** from **Ubi Soft** and **Gaumont**.



IT'S A WORLD OF INTENSE ACCURACY,
RICH GRAPHICS AND UNBELIEVABLE DETAILS.
NOW GET OUT THERE AND DESTROY IT.

GUNDAM SIDE STORY 0079

It's Gundam Side Story 0079, Rise from the Ashes with 3D battle simulation, movie-quality sound track and Gundam - quality mass destruction. Electronic Gaming Monthly[®] called it, "... some of the richest graphics yet on Dreamcast. Each of the mechs are cut with so much detail, they look like FMV at a glance." And a glance is all the insidious Zaku forces will get, before your jump jet action and zoom-in weapon features blow them into another dimension.



WATCH GUNDAM WING ONLY ON

TOONAMI
CARTOON
NETWORK

Sega Dreamcast.





PREVIEW
GALLERY



DEMOLITION DERBY

Driving in a demolition derby is more painful than you'd think. Just ask former EGM editor Che Chou. At a recent Sony sponsored demo derby, Che injured his neck after plowing into another car...poor kid.

Stunt GP

This **Infogrames** title (due out this **summer**) combines racing and stunt action. The futuristic vehicles can flip multiple times, perform 360s, and maneuver loops while in pursuit of the checkered flag.



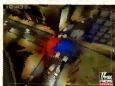
Demolition Racer-No Exit

Demolition Racer (PS) got decent scores; hopefully this version will as well. We only hope it doesn't use the overly arcade-like Test Drive 5 (DC) game engine. Regardless, it won't be an exact port by any standards. All-new cars, power-ups and two new tracks are featured. The premise remains the same, however—race for position and points for wrecking others. **Infogrames** will release DR-No Exit this **June**.



World's Scariest Police Chases

You've seen the scariest police chases ever caught on tape on TV. Now you get to create them yourself. Get behind the wheel of a police car and chase down the bad guys in **Fox Interactive's** latest, coming **Q4 2000**. Developed by Teeny Weeny Games, it's set up as a special edition of the hit television show—with host Sheriff John Bunnell providing the play-by-play. The shots shown here were taken from PC development stations.



NFL Quarterback Club 2001

Gird your jocks straps and take to the gridiron this **August** with NFL Quarterback Club 2001. **Acclaim** has done a major AI overhaul along with updating the player graphics so receivers look scrawny compared to the behemoth linemen. A new passing scheme has been added (thankfully) in addition to an "oomph" button which allows runners to bust through the line while protecting the ball.



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GAMERX

"From the melodic sounds of Final Fantasy VIII, to the upbeat 70's style music of Vigilante, the Sound Station helped provide a great atmosphere throughout!"
E.G.M.S., COMBO-REV



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PREVIEW
GALLERY

DID YOU KNOW?

Ren & Stimpy creator John K. is a big fan of Ultimate Fighting Championship. In fact, at one point a while back, he had a big article on the Spunco site about how much he liked it. Check out www.spunco.com.

Test Drive: Off-Road 3

If you have an urge to take big and rowdy vehicles into the wild, then **Infogrames** has just the sequel for you—complete with Hummer, no less. The races won't be very fast, but you won't have to slow down for the wildlife either. *Test Drive: Off-Road 3* focuses on real-life physics in addition to different types of terrain in this roughneck's wet dream.



Test Drive Cycles

EGM had a chance to witness an exclusive preview of **Infogrames'** *Test Drive Cycles* for the Dreamcast. Beyond a silky-smooth frame-rate and gorgeous graphics, the title packs all the same features as its PS counterpart (52 tracks, over 35 licensed bikes, etc.), plus a few other goodies. Specifically, an additional course and more AI riders competing in each race and the Special Events Mode. Look for *TD Cycles* this **Fall**.



Dragonriders: Chronicles of Pern

This 3D action/adventure from **Ubi Soft** is based on the *Dragonrider* series of sci-fi/fantasy novels by Anne McCaffrey. The game takes place in the dying world of Pern, where you take on a variety of quests, puzzles, combat and more. As you might have guessed, the game's filled with lots of dragons and...well, dragon riders. We'll have more on this one after E3. It's due for release some time in **September**.



Ultimate Fighting Championship

Crave and Japanese developer **Anchor** are bringing us this fighter based on the Ultimate Fighting Championship. *UFC* features over 20 of the most dangerous brawlers around (some real-life UFC combatants, and others created specifically for the game). Like the real-life UFC matches, the game is as real as it gets—raw punches, kicks and a variety of amazing fighting styles. Look for it **later this year**.



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PREVIEW
GALLERY



LODOSS WAR RECORDS

If you want to know more about the Lodoss War RPG or anime series, there's tons of fans and info to be found out there on the Web. A good place to start is <http://www.meta-earth.com/lodoss/index.html>.

Super Runabout

Combine one part Crazy Taxi and one part Driver, and you've got a good idea what this new Runabout sequel from Climax is all about. (Other games in the series include the original PlayStation game, released here as Felony 11-79, and Runabout 2, also for the PS and due next month from Hot-B. Got all that?)

After choosing your car and mission (the one we tried had you find and disarm six bombs around San Francisco), it's the same drive anywhere-style gameplay as the previous games, just with beefed-up graphics courtesy of the DC. You earn money for smashing up other cars, busses, and just generally causing mayhem, but be careful—damage to your vehicle makes it harder to drive, and if you bust it up too bad it's game over.

The version we played looked great but with slightly sluggish controls—making it hard to turn and accelerate after collisions—but we'll reserve judgement until after Super Runabout is released **May 25** in Japan.



Grandia II

Nothing more to say about **Game Arts'** upcoming RPG this month except for "it's looking freaking good!" We had to pass along more screens after we saw this game in action at the Tokyo Game Show.

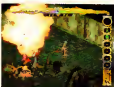
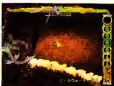


Record of Lodoss War

Based on the popular Japanese anime series and pen and paper role-playing game, this action/RPG from **Kadokawa Shoten** may not look like much from these screens, but we found ourselves hooked on the playable demo we got at the last Tokyo Game Show.

In many ways, Lodoss War borrows from recent PC RPGs like Diablo—the small characters, detached 3/4 overhead perspective, conversations with non-player characters, and inventory system are all similar. The graphics may look simple, but they allow plenty of enemies on screen simultaneously, and they make it possible for the camera to zoom way in or out of a scene as needed.

Lodoss War is due out **June 29** in Japan. No word on a U.S. release.



You must be **dreaming.**



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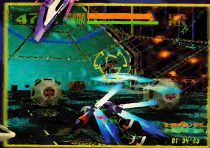
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"Every facet of the game, from its zany appearance to its goofy character designs and nutty score, is tailored to perfection. Rating: A-"
Dave Halverson • Gamers' Republic

"Its rather unique look and feel, combined with solid gameplay and a zany cast of characters...ensure Neo a place among the Dreamcast's elite."
Greg Orlando • DailyRadar.com

"Everything moves so well, and the worlds are so full of color that Neo will make quite an impression on anyone who sees it."
Brandon Justice • Dreamcast.IGN.com



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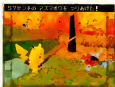
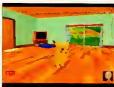
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PREVIEW
GALLERY

Hey You, Pikachu!

What if you had your very own Pikachu to talk to? What would you say? **Nintendo's** going to give you that chance **this holiday season**. In *Hey You, Pikachu!* you get your very own Pika-pal to talk to and go on special missions with. Whether it's gathering food for a hungry Bulbasaur, helping out a group of Caterpies and their Butterfree friend, or just going for a walk, you've gotta keep Pikachu happy and entertained.



The World Is Not Enough

EA and **Eurocom** are bringing us this Bond FPS based on the movie **late this year**. Could it be better than *Perfect Dark*? We'll soon see.



Eternal Darkness

We don't have much to show you on this one, but we can tell you a little bit about the game. It's a rather cinematic action/adventure title from *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* developer **Silicon Knights** and **Nintendo** coming sometime **later this year**. Players travel through time, fighting gangs of thugs and various beasts, in order to prevent the human race from being enslaved. We should have more on this one after E3.



He's still the b**o**mb!



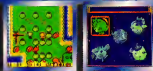
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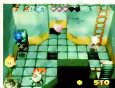
Conker's Bad Fur Day

Here's an update on **Rare's** Conker's BFD. It looks amazing, and should be a blast with its M rating. Look for it **late this year**



Bomberman 64: The Second Attack

It's been a couple of years, but Bomberman is finally returning to the N64. To be honest, the **Second Attack** looks a helluva lot like the first game. You will find at least a couple of interesting new features though—a two-player simultaneous Story mode, and new bomb types including ice, hurricane, lightning and gravity bombs. Bomberman ships this **May**.



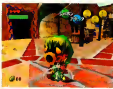
Cruis'n Exotica

Midway takes a lot of heat for putting out archaically simple arcade racing games, and it looks like their latest title isn't going to change that trend. This eager beaver takes the tried and true Cruis'n engine to the next level by offering 12 new tracks set in imaginative locations. For example, you'll get a chance to race under water in the Lost City of Atlantis track (as you can see from the picture, there's plenty of atmosphere down there). Other locales include the Planet Mars course and the glitzy Vegas run. Look for sharper graphics and a faster frame-rate, but don't expect a drastic difference from the previous Cruis'n games. Cruis'n Exotica will be four-player, Rumble and Memory Pak capable when it debuts sometime in the **next four months**.



Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask

Nintendo recently released new shots this one, so an update is in order. In this sequel, Link finds himself in an alternate dimension where a rather evil Moon is on its way down—its crash will destroy the world and everything on it. You have three days to stop this from happening. Link can turn into new characters with interesting powers and abilities via magical masks. Majora's Mask should be available in the **fall**.



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Tekken Tag Tournament

Publisher:	Namco
Developer:	Namco
Player:	1-4
Genre:	Fighting
% Done:	100%
Release:	Nov-Japan
Also In:	None
Web Address:	www.namco.co.jp

The Good: Tekken hits the next-gen in style.

The Bad: If you've played Tekken 3 you've played this.

And The Ugly: Soul Calibur still looks better.



The boys and girls are back and they look pretty damn good. Along with the usual cast of Kazuya, Paul, Yoshimitsu (who moonlighted in Soul Calibur), and Nina, is almost everyone who's appeared in T1, 2 and 3. Added to TTT is the mysterious boss known only as Unknown.

TEKKEN BOWL

Spare!

Get your bowl on with Tekken's bowl-o-then.



Tekken is back (as if you ever really thought it was gone) and better than ever. Just released in Japan on March 30, roughly a month after the release of the PlayStation 2, Tekken Tag Tournament (along with Ridge Racer V) is arguably the most anticipated title in the PS2's first-generation salvo of software. Much like Soul Calibur for the Dreamcast, Tekken Tag Tournament was originally developed on Namco's PlayStation-based System-12 hardware. What this has enabled Namco to do is hone the gameplay on the technologically dated arcade hardware, then subsequently jock up the graphics "to eleven" on the PS2's infinitely more powerful hardware.

So what does that mean for Johnny Gamer? For starters, just about every character that's ever appeared in a Tekken game (a total of 38 if you include "body-doubles" like Kuma/Panda and Alex/Roger) is assembled here. Kazuya is back from

the bottomless chasm that Heihachi dumped him in at the end of T2, but novelty manga-character Gon the dinosaur has been Jack-booted to the great unknown. Doctor Boskonovitch is also on hiatus, presumably lying down on his back somewhere.

As the title indicates, this is Tekken, with the ability to tag a partner in and out of action at the press of a button. This makes for some interesting strategies and intriguing match-ups. Combine power and speed? A defensive expert with an offensive powerhouse? TTT offers a multitude of possibilities, but it's all up to you to decide. It's not a fight to the finish as in games like Marvel vs. Capcom; instead, the match is decided by the first player to knock out any one of his opponent's characters.

As you'd expect, the graphics in TTT take a huge leap over what the PlayStation is capable of. While the arcade setup had loads of RAM to store the four characters, the original PlayStation could never handle this much data. The PS2 obviously is a different matter. Higher polygon-count character models, 3D backgrounds (no 2D wrap-arounds like the PS version of T3) and hi-res, 60FPS graphics are all part of the basic package. In addition to the usual versus, survival and training modes, there is also a "secret" mode called Tekken Bowl, which lets you take to the lanes with your favorite Tekken characters. Expect this to be a launch title when the PS2 arrives in the U.S. this fall. 🍻



There's something strangely comforting about having the whole Tekken family back together for a friendly melee.



Dead or Alive 2

Publisher:	Tecmo
Developer:	Team Ninja
Players:	1-4
Genre:	Fighting
% Done:	100%
Release:	New-Japan
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.tecmo.co.jp
The Good:	The fastest 3D fighter yet.
The Bad:	There is no bad.
And The Why:	Tengu looks like a walking dookie.



The classic "reversal" style of gameplay is back, but improved to prevent unnecessary "turtling."



No, it's not a bad screenshot. The final battle in the PS2 version of DoA2 uses this special trippy blur effect.

SUPERMODEL

Girlfriend!

Here are some of the extra outfits in the PS2 version.



The bounce is back in town, and so are Kasumi, Lei Fang, Tina Armstrong and the boys. Ayane returns in even bustier form, and new characters Helena and Ein are introduced for the first time. Strangely, Bayman has been ejected for the carbon-copy but completely original turban-wearing character Leon.

As in the first game, the fighting engine is an evolution of the famous Virtua Fighter setup, meaning there is a punch and a kick button, while pulling back effects your block. The hold button from the first DOA has been renamed the "free" button, while the final offensive command arrives in the form of a throw button. Whereas the first game was a nonstop reversal-fest with often comedic



displays of two players constantly trying to negate each other's attacks, DOA2 rectifies the problem by adding a three-tiered application of the system. Instead of just reversing your opponent to death, you have to anticipate whether their attack is going to arrive high, medium or low. If you forecast your enemy's blows correctly you'll pull off a nifty counter move of significantly damaging power. If you don't, you'll get an Express Mail smackdown that'll teach you a quick lesson in manners.

The PlayStation2 version doesn't boast much over the already released Dreamcast version, but there are differences. The PS2 game features a few different backgrounds and gives some characters an extra costume or two. No big deal, but worth noting if you're digging for extra stuff. The game balancing from the "millennium" arcade version has also been implemented. Oh, and there's the "Kasumi floating naked in a blob of jello" cinema that went missing from the Dreamcast version. Otherwise, this is generally the same game we all know and love on Sega's system, just without some of the anti-aliasing the DC offers.

While Sega has an exclusivity contract on DOA2 for the U.S. market for a while, it may expire by the time the PS2 launches in the States. If it does, we might see this one as part of the initial lineup of software. And as the fastest 3D fighter around, expect this to be a must-own for serious fighting buffs.





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DREAMCAST

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**Hellfire**

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**World Series Baseball 2K1**

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**Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse**

A gothic fantasy adventure in which you play as Anna, who's trying to discover the secret behind her superhuman powers.

**Gene GT**

The best looking racing game to hit the Dreamcast so far. The trackside detail and atmospheric effects are all top-notch.

**Destruction**

Absolutely stunning visuals in this action/adventure title that clearly demonstrates the potential of the Dreamcast.

**Solo Ops: Omega Squad**

You'll have to watch your back in this one. Lots of covert action for fans of the long-running Spec Ops series.

**Castlevania: Resurrection**

Castlevania's 12th and bloodiest incarnation. Step into this tangled, trap-filled castle, ready to whip and slash these suckers to Hell and back.

**Tony Hawk Pro Skater**

Filled with many extras not found on other systems, Tony Hawk for Dreamcast will feature improved graphics, and a four-player mode.

**Sonic Channel 3**

The Morlocks are trying to take over the Earth and Ulala (a reporter for Space Channel 5) is trying to cover the event.



PLAYSTATION

**Mystic**

It was foretold that the messiah would return after 2,000 years. Apparently, he caught an earlier flight.

**Lunar 2: Eternal Blue**

The success and level of interest in the first Lunar assures that we get the second. RPG fans should set some time aside for this.

**Hellbound: Hell in the King**

In this adventure set eight years after Army of Darkness, you must continue the search for the Book of the Dead.

**Time Crisis: Project Titan with Guncon**

The Time Crisis games continue! Get out your Guncon and take aim.

**Nightmare Creatures 2**

The evil scientist Dr. Adam Crowley is back—bigger and meaner than before. With the help of a zombie you must stop the doctor's evil designs.

**Chase the Express**

A Resident Evil-style game from Sony that's sure to keep you on the edge of your seat.

**Dead or Alive 2**

In Tecmo's latest Dead or Alive installment, you'll find multi-level stages, a Tag Match mode, and new characters such as Helena, an opera singer.

**Vanishing Point**

An ambitious racing game with strong emphasis on physics and exculcating attention to detail.

**Getido**

With so levels of intense fighting action and a four-player arena to duke it out in, this scrolling fighter is a hot one.

**Spider-Man**

With the help of Black Cat as a guide, Spidey must work through various missions of danger-filled adventure.

**The Legend of Dragoon**

This game from Sony is a combination of scrolling fighting action and platform jumping that has a distinctly old-school flavor to it.



NINTENDO 64

**StarCraft 64**

The PC hit will make it to the N64! Marines, Zealots and Zerglings will battle it out on a split-screen two-player action.

**Spider-Man**

Activision's hoping to fully realize Spidey's potential in dynamic 3D. You gotta love swingin' from ledge to ledge...that never gets old.

**Perfect Dark**

Even better than GoldenEye, this 3D shooter offers more options than any before. An instant classic.

**4-Wheel Mutant Academy**

This installment from the popular comic franchise features 13 characters, including favorites like Wolverine, Gambit, Iceman and others.

**Conker's Bad Fur Day**

Conker awakens to find himself in a scene out of Saving Private Ryan... Our happy squirrel friend is thrust into a violent, M-rated very adult world.



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One of the most intense Game Boy Color System titles ever. A direct conversion of the original PlayStation blockbuster.

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**4-Wheel Mutant Academy**

This game features a state-of-the-art fighting engine and stunning animations, plus real-time character morphing and battle damage.

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Includes tons of new items and gadgets for enhanced gameplay, more humor, and a totally new experience. All new levels of wacky action!



Ninten X

First-person rendition of Zelda 64's combat. One-hundred percent unsettling descent into the world of the occult and ass-kicking gameplay.



Danger Girl

Play as one of three comic book Danger Girl characters involved in an elite spy agency duking it out with terrorists and other villains.



Wild Arms 2

Continues the PSX tradition of excellent RPG action. Supports a fully polygonal world, new characters and a fresh, compelling story line.



MadMax 2

Undead anti-hero Sir Daniel Fortesque awakes once again from his peaceful eternal slumber to fight foul demons and evil villains.



All Star Baseball 2001

Home run-swinging, double play turning, hit and run, throw-'em-out-at-the-plate phenomenon that is the answer to all your baseball prayers.



Excitebike 64

The best-selling Excitebike for the NES leaps to the N64. Wear your virtual leathers and lead a pack of knobby-tire Paks in at home.



Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2001

Vastly superior to the original-bigger-badder bikes, challenging tracks and the most ferocious competitors on the Supercross circuit.



Tomb Raider

Lara performs all her famous moves in this hand-held version of the game, where she must search for the all-powerful Dream Stone.

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NO CLONES?

Namco maintains that RRV contains no clones of real cars, but we're not so sure. The McLaren F1 looks a lot like the Kamata Angelus from the game, don't you think?

PS2

PREVIEW

Ridge Racer V

Publisher:	Namco
Developer:	Namco
Players:	1
Genre:	Racing
% Done:	100%
Release:	New-Japan
Also On:	None

Web Address: www.namco.co.jp

The Good: The graphics, the speed, the sound, it's all good!

The Bad: Having to complete the game with every car to unlock every secret.

And The Why: You need to pay exorbitant import prices to play this game right now.



The Kamata Angelus (above) has the highest top speed and the tightest handling in the game. The car's so good it's almost scary.

As usual, the key to success in the world of Ridge Racer is knowing how to powerslide around every curve.



HIDDEN CARS

Pac-Mania!

Complete 3,000 km and get a nice surprise. Pac-Man racing has to be the coolest hidden extra in a Namco game to date. "You can do it! You can do the Pac-Man!"



I would have been easy to slap together a bare-bones racing title with some shiny graphics and call it a PS2 game. Of course, Namco's never been known for taking a minimalist approach to anything.

Although it went on sale the same day as Sony's new system, Ridge Racer V doesn't feel like a launch game at all. Anyone willing to spend a bit of time playing it will find that this is a full-featured racer. Whether it's just a matter of winning every race to getting the odometer past a certain milestone (the game keeps track of the total distance you've driven after every race), it seems like every other time we turn on RRV there's something new. Endurance racing, new engines, the Duel mode and even a



Pac-Man race featuring our favorite pellet-gobbler (see sidebar), can all be found.

So how does it play? Beautifully. The Ridge Racer series has always been about white-knuckle speed and powersliding around tight turns, and so it is in this latest sequel. Fans of any game in the RR series, be it the original Ridge Racer or the more original Ridge Racer, will find something to love here. The different cars in RRV cater to any driving style, and the unique handling of each machine makes racing a pleasure no matter who you are.

And of course the visuals are stunning. While it does have some of the "jaggies" many PS2 titles seem to share, the whole thing still looks gorgeous and moves at a super-smooth frame-rate. The roadside detail is superb and especially easy to appreciate during the replays. As usual, car models are sleek and sexy and adorned with decals of Namco's past arcade hits. Later in the game you can even customize your car's designs yourself.

Namco's done it again...how surprising. 🐾

TODAY'S FORECAST: HEAVY FOG

Of course RRV is just a first-generation game, but quite a bit of fog and some slowdown in the split-screen multiplayer mode (below) shows that the PS2 has its limitations after all.

PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

Gran Turismo 2000

Even as Gran Turismo 2 continues to tear up the PlayStation sales charts, **Polyphony Digital** is hard at work porting it to Sony's powerhouse PlayStation2. Needless to say, it's going to be an extremely pretty racing game.

Most of the improvements in Gran Turismo 2000 are slated to be strictly visual. Improved vehicle and track models are the most obvious features, along with a really impressive, real-time reflection effect on the surface of your car. The lines in the road and track walls are clearly visible on the car's finish as you drive by them.

Gameplay-wise, Gran Turismo 2000 is currently supposed to contain the same tracks, cars and events as its PlayStation counterpart. However, the game will take advantage of the DualShock 2's analog buttons. No more "feathering" the gas and brake to make those tricky turns; now it's a matter of how much pressure is applied to the controller buttons. There's still no release date set for GT2K.



Driving Emotion Type S

Having finally played **Square's** Type S, our first impressions are mixed. Our disappointment stems from the game's surprisingly loose control. Initially it seems like the vehicles are sliding on ice, and it can be hard just to drive straight. Once we tweaked a few ride settings it was better, but overall it needs work. Perhaps there's still time to tighten it up before the North American release...we'll see.



Evergrace

It's been a while since we've last shown you **From Software's** Evergrace, so here are some new pics from the long-awaited action/RPG. The title is currently slated for release on **April 27 in Japan**.



PUMPKINNY

In Evergrace, you can use any items or objects you collect as clothing/helmets. So let's say you happen to pick up a jack-o-lantern along the way. You can use that as a helmet. Or let's say you grab some pots and pans...you can wear a pot on your head and use a skillet as a weapon. Cool, eh?



CAUTION: MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR PEOPLE WHO SUCK AT VIDEO GAMES.

If you're going to try playing Digimon World, you'd better make sure you're wearing two pairs of underpants. See, some of these Digimon are so vicious and twisted they were actually banned from television. That's okay with them, there are more things to blow up in video games anyway. Like you. So if you think you've got enough game for Digimon World, bring it. But don't say we didn't warn you.



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Sega Dreamcast.

A promotional image for the Tomb Raider: Core game. Lara Croft is shown in a dynamic, forward-leaning pose, holding a handgun. She is wearing her signature black tank top, shorts, and a utility belt. The scene is set in a dimly lit, rocky environment with warm, orange and yellow lighting. In the background, there are some wooden structures and a small black lamp on a stand to the left.

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on the
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CORE

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

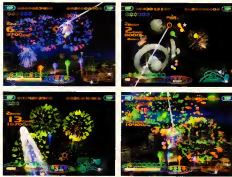
tombraider.com

PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

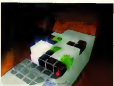
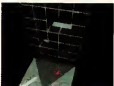
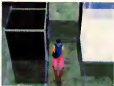
Fantavision

Sony's *Fantavision* (available now in Japan) seems like just an excuse to show off some cool PS2 effects. The game itself is a mix of connect the dots and missile command, where you connect like-colored fireworks and detonate them before they fizzle out. You can create combos which yield even more dazzling eye candy, and save your level replays on a memory card to watch at your leisure. Addictive, yet short, puzzle game.



IQ Remix+

A few years ago, Sony released a little-known puzzle game called *Intelligent Qube*. While not a mega-hit (what puzzle game is, except for Tetris?), it gained a small cult following. Developer **Sugar & Rockets** now brings the game to the PS2 with a few changes: a soft, motion blur-induced look, plus two new types of levels. *Forbidden Wall* presents you with a "wall" of the black blocks stacked up. There are holes in it, and you have to move your character to the space on the board where a hole will fall so he won't get crushed. Then there's the *Forbidden Maze*, which zooms in tight on the board, forcing you to play a hedge maze-type game. You also get a mode called *100 Attack*, which presents you with 100 different set puzzles. *IQ Remix+* is available now in Japan.



Armored Core 2

We had a chance to try **From Software's** latest mech building/shooting action game at the last Tokyo Game Show, and what we played seemed mostly just like the previous games in the series (including no analog support—why?), but of course with way better graphics courtesy of the PS2. The explosions and swarming missiles are especially impressive, and reps did tell us the game will allow more customization of your robots than before. *AC2* is due out this summer.



IQ TESTS

Wonder what your IQ is? (That's intelligence quotient, not your mad skills at the game IQ.) Check out www.iqtest.com for some quick and fun insight into your intelligence. Then continue killing your brain with wrestling.

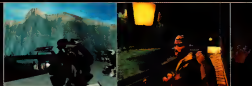


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RUNE-CRAFT



Onimusha: Warlords

Capcom's *Onimusha* is a fictional tale set against the historical backdrop of 16th-century Japan. Warlord Nobunaga Oda is about to invade Inabayama Castle—but before he does, the princess Yukihiro is mysteriously kidnapped. Samanosuke, a warrior, sneaks into the castle and declares that he will rescue her. He faces an uphill battle against human and non-human opponents. The game combines puzzle solving of the *Resident Evil* series with Samurai swordplay. Japanese actor Takeshi Kaneshiro was motion captured and used for the likeness of the main character. Here are FMV clips from the game's intro, set for a **fall Japan/U.S. release**.



Midnight Club

Ever wish you could just drive anywhere you wanted to in a city—on the sidewalks, smash your way through traffic—and not get arrested for it? Sure, we all have. **Rockstar Games** and **Angel Studios** are making that dream a reality this **fall** with *Midnight Club*. Race through some of the biggest cities in the world, ignoring traffic signals and laws against some of the toughest opponents on the road.



Gunslinger

Activision seems ready to tackle the wild wild west without the help of Will Smith in this **spring 2003** release, 3D action game. *Gunslinger* lets you be a villain or a hero, depending on your actions during the game. Lots of old west distractions are available such as poker games, hijacking stagecoaches, and rescuing prisoners. As you progress through the game, your character acquires new skills—maybe even cow brandin'.



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Munch's Oddysee

All's not well in the land of Oddworld. Munch has been kidnapped, trapped, and now has some sort of alien device in his skull. What's more, his race is nearly extinct. Your job is to get things back on the right track for the Mudokans. *Munch's Oddysee* is the second chapter in the Oddworld Quintology, and looks simply amazing. No doubt this one from **Oddworld Inhabitants** and **Infogrames** will be a killer app.



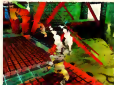
Street Fighter EX3

Capcom/Arika's 3D Street Fighter EX series has made the jump to PlayStation2. This version includes your favorite characters from the 2D SF series including Blanka and Chun-Li (Spinning Bird Kick!). The graphics are nothing too special for a PS2 game, but up to four combatants can be on-screen at once and you also get a new Tag Battle system, where the characters run in a little circle before leaving the screen. **Available now in**



Oni

Combining hand-to-hand combat with gunslinging action, *Oni* (Japanese for "demon" or "ghost") is the tale of Konoko, an agent with the Tech Crimes Task Force who inadvertently discovers the truth about her past. After finding out that her mother and father were killed by the organization that she was once a part of, she strikes back hard. *Oni* is being developed for the PC (pictured here) by **Bungie Software**, and will be released **later in 2000** on the PS2 by **Rockstar Games**.



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PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY



MOTOR MAYHEM!

Motor Mayhem may feature some radical-looking futuristic cycles but for our money nothing beats this awesome mini drag-bike.

**Star Wars:
Episode I
Starfighter**

Inspired by LucasArts' X-Wing and Rogue Squadron flight-combat games, this PlayStation2-exclusive title drops you into the cockpits of the Phantom Menace's sleekest dogfighters. Ship types include the Naboo Starfighter, as well as several never-before-seen craft. You're in for a wait, though; LucasArts won't ship Starfighter until the first half of 2002.



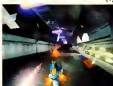
**Star Wars:
Super Bombad
Racing**

When LucasArts' top brass announced their first Episode I titles last year, they said to expect future games in every conceivable genre. They weren't kidding. Super Bombad Racing—due this fall—drops Jar Jar, Sebulba, Yoda and five other Star Wars personalities into a Mario Kart-inspired race set in far-flung locales from that galaxy far, far away.



Motor Mayhem!

Infogrames isn't saying much about Motor Mayhem, but from what we've gathered it's a motorcycle combat racer set in the far future. The year is 2166 and the World Vehicle Combat League is the popular sport of the day. Like other apocalyptic titles a pretentious, sometimes cheesy story line boils down to just racing and fighting. We're digging the way those vehicles look, though. Watch for Motor Mayhem! this fall.



X-Squad

It's the year 2037, naughty terrorists have released a biological plague, and it's time for you to do something about it. In what appears to be a futuristic take on Rainbow Six, X-Squad (previously X-Fire) is a third-person, 3D action game where you must coordinate squads to accomplish your missions. Loads of high-tech weapons are at your disposal to clear out the dreary cityscapes, sewers and subways in this fall release from EA.



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When Bitterness Stains the Land
When Hope Fades from Memory**

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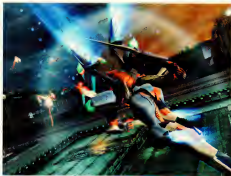


Our games go to 11

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Z.O.E.

First of all, just take a gander at these screenshots—and yes, that's all real-time graphics. Now, as if Z.O.E. didn't already look good enough, Konami has announced that this new action/adventure game is being produced by Metal Gear Solid mastermind **Hideo Kojima**. Yes! Z.O.E. (short for Zone of the Enders) will feature exploration elements similar to *Zelda* for the N64, along with more action-oriented battles.



1/4

From **Software** released these teaser pics of their next PlayStation2 game, the oddly named 1/4. Take control of up to three party members in this fantasy RPG, set to come out sometime **this year**.

The Mechsmith
Run=Dim

Another mech game, this one from **Idea Factory**. *Run=Dim* is set for release this year in Japan, with an anime and comic series in 2005.



WHIRR, WHIRR, WHIRR
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by now, you know the drill.



It's addictive. It's frenetic. It's a total blast! It's Mr. Driller, the pick-up-and-play puzzle game that's a hole lot of fun. Strap on your hard hat, fire up your drill and tunnel into action. Mr. Driller takes seconds to learn, yet provides years of challenge and enjoyment. Be prepared: once you start drillin' there is no chillin'!

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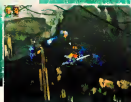
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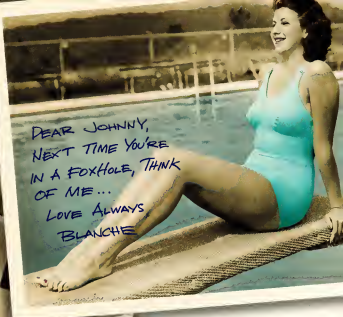
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BLANCHE

Johnny,
Come liberate
me!
Love
Ethel



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plastic fantastic!
Call me...
Love, Agnes



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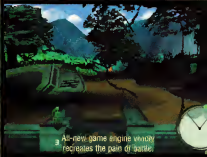


Dear Johnny,
You see Edna
My leader any day!
Love,
Edna
XOXOXO

Edna? How'd you
get this number?
No! I can't talk
right now...we're
about to launch a
major offensive!



WWII-based tactical action with
20 missions covering 5 terrains.



All-new game engine vividly
recreates the pain of battle.



Intense head-to-head and
cooperative multi-player modes.

ARMY MEN WORLD WAR

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PREVIEW

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Neversoft
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action
% Bros.	50%
Release:	Summer/Fall
Play On:	Dreamcast, GBC, PC
Web Address:	www.activision.com www.tonyhawk.com

The Good: Can't stop playing. Wait, that might be the bad.

The Bad: Loads of dexterity required to pull off big combos.

And the Ugly: Virtual broken boards, noses and necks.



The nose or tail manual gives you a transition move between grind points. Can you say million-point combo?



THPS2 keeps track of your board orientation, making switch stance moves and grinds harder to pull off and control.

SKATE HISTORY

Board Room

Check out this brief rundown of deck evolution:

It all started with metal roller-skate wheels on a thick wood plank.



Clay wheels replaced steel in the '60s.

The '70s brought us urethane wheels and fiberglass decks.



In the '80s, wider was better, so were grind protectors, bunpers and grab rails.



Today's boards are simple, light and symmetrical.

Tony Hawk's first skateboard game has been on the shelves for six months and on the top-50 best-sellers list for most of them.

Neversoft listened to THPS' legion of fans and added their most requested features to the sequel.

The game provides as much gotta-play-one-more-time addictive gameplay as the first version, with even more moves and multiplayer modes to keep you in a permanent state of procrastination. You can potentially perform an Infinite combo with the new manual transition move. Tapping up then down starts the move, which you must balance like a grind while you ride it to the next grindable obstacle. The multiplayer modes are still a favorite around the office, and THPS2 offers plenty new

options to keep us busy. A split-screen trick attack mode lets you play against a friend to see who can pull off the most bitchin' tricks. There's a full-on judged skate competition for up to seven opponents. You also get an enhanced H-O-R-S-E mode, as well as an improved one-player career game and beefed-up replay features.

Of course, the most exciting new feature would have to be the skatepark editor. The interface is super-intuitive: We were able to crank out a pretty sweet park in about 30 minutes. A real-time 3D editor provides isometric or top-down views and hundreds of parts including ramps, bowls, rails, funboxes, obstacles and quarterpipes. We were told you could build stuff up to 60 feet high. There's such a diverse assortment of objects that Neversoft was even able to faithfully re-create the first level of Tony Hawk 1 with the editor. And you can save your personal skatepark to the memory card, so look for lots of custom parks coming soon on DexDrive sites.

The levels sprawl larger than in the previous version, with several real-world locations including Paris, Manhattan, Ventura, Calif., and Philadelphia. You'll see plenty of seemingly inaccessible areas and objects, but there are ways to reach everything.

A full-blown character customization option lets you modify the pro skaters' clothes, create a new you or just about anybody else you can think of. Sorry, no E-Sak option. 🐱



The Legend of Dragoon

Platform:	SCEA
Developer:	SCEI
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	75%
Release:	June
Also In:	None

Web Address: www.playstation.com
The Good: Engaging battle system and gorgeous art direction.

The Bad: Derivative story line.
Add This Info: Eighty hours of gameplay. Gah! Who's got that kind of time?!



Transform into a Dragoon and you'll get your own supercool outfit and delicate pair of wings to match!

Battles require a mixture of strategy and quick reaction times. You'll need razor-sharp reflexes in order to pull off the most powerful "Additional" attacks.



ENCOUNTERS

Thumb Taps

Fighting is no passive event in Dragoon. You'll be putting that thumb to work! The Additional (top) and Dragoon (middle) attacks call for carefully timed presses, while magic item attacks (bottom) require all-out button mashing much like the Guardian Force boosts in Final Fantasy VIII.



Not content to merely have built the world's leading consoles, Sony has thrown its hat into the RPG developers' ring with their ambitious new project titled The Legend of Dragoon.

Featuring a cast of nine playable characters, Dragoon immerses you in a world where mankind's very existence is threatened by numerous factors, ranging from civil war to the return of a mysterious race of beings that threatens to unleash a devastating evil force on the populace. The story focuses on Dart, the young hero on a quest for revenge who ends up pursuing loftier goals as he learns of his role in ensuring the future of humanity.

Yes, we know—it's certainly not the most inspired story line. But Dragoon has plenty of other intriguing elements to capture the fancy of RPGers. Take the battle system, for example. Fighting centers on "Additional" attacks, which require you to nail a



Arrows direct you to the numerous end points in towns and dungeons. Thankfully, you can turn these indicators off if you so desire.



series of carefully timed button presses to trigger a powerful finishing blow (see sidebar). Precision is a must, as the slightest misstep will throw off an attack. Adding to the challenge is the fact that enemies will occasionally counterattack, which requires a quick reaction in order to avoid being blown back.

And then there are the Dragoon attacks: Throughout the game, your party members gain the ability to harness the power of dragon spirits. Build up enough special points during battles and you'll be given the choice to transform; you'll then have to pull off a different series of timed button presses to pummel your foes with furious power. As a Dragoon, you'll also have access to a range of magic attacks, which vary greatly depending on the character.

When you're not fighting, you'll be treated to a gorgeous world composed of CG backgrounds that rival those found in Square's Final Fantasy series. Details abound, including nifty visual effects like dancing flames, running water and billowing fog.

Spanning four discs and promising some 80 hours of gameplay, Dragoon may be yet another premier RPG for the PlayStation. But does Sony have what it takes to rival the likes of Squaresoft? From what we've seen so far, Dragoon holds plenty of promise—but we'll know for sure when we get our hands on the reviewable version next month. 🐉

Breath of Fire 4

Capcom has started work on an English version of their latest RPG, *Breath of Fire 4*, and hopes to have it out here **September** of this year. Besides an all-new art style and improved graphics, *BoF4* features a new combat system, including combos and a frontline/rear tactical setup. The popular fishing game is also rumored to return, and may be compatible with the PS fishing pole controllers! More on this one soon.



Threads of Fate

Threads of Fate is probably the least known and anticipated game in **Square's** 2000 lineup. The game formerly known as *Dew Prism* (its Japanese name) is reminiscent of Square's last foray into the action-RPG genre, *Brave Fencer Musashi*. *Threads of Fate* boasts a story line that is dependent on which of the two main characters you choose. Those who are in the mood for a lighthearted adventure can choose Mint's quest. If you're more of a pensive, serious type, Rue's story of revenge and redemption is more up your alley. You are unable to switch characters in the middle of the game, but their paths will eventually cross. The gameplay is a rather simplistic setup; both Mint and Rue have weapons for physical attacks, and can perform "hack-hack-slash" combos. Mint also possesses the ability to use magic, based on seven different colors of elemental. Rue can't use magic, but he can transform into any enemy he has defeated, enabling new attacks and abilities. *Threads of Fate* is scheduled for a **July 28** release.





REMEMBER WHEN...

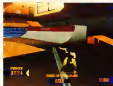
Fred Flintstone used his feet to stop his vehicle? Yep, that guy probably has some serious bunions. You could say every time he stopped he had his very own kind of grind session.

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Grind Session

Here's an update on this one from **Shaba Games** and **SCEA**. We can't help but think of Tony Hawk when we play Grind Session, but there are some distinct differences. Some of the levels are bigger with a variety of interesting extras. The graphics are sharper as well (although it's debatable whether they're better). Keep in mind, these shots are from an early version. Look for it **May 23**.



Legend of Mana

In October, we brought you the first details about the fourth installment of the popular **Squaresoft** Seiken Densetsu series, **Legend of Mana**. We now have a near-complete copy of the English version in our hands, and things are looking very nice. Here's a bit of a refresher preview before the game's highly anticipated release in June.

Legend of Mana is based around a "Landmake" system, which allows the player to place towns and other locations on the world map wherever they please. Proper placement of map locations requires you to pay attention to the Mana level of the land; placing a town on a patch of land with high Mana levels has an effect on what is created. The battle system is very similar to *Secret of Mana*, with up to three players (depending on who is in the main character's party at the time) joining in the real-time combat. The remarkably beautiful sprite-based artwork and sweeping, emotive musical score makes **Legend of Mana** the one to watch this **summer**, as part of Square's "Summer of Adventure" RPG fest.





PREVIEW

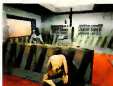
Medal of Honor Underground

Ready for more Nazi-busting? This time you'll fight Hitler's regime in North Africa and Europe—but you'll have to wait until this fall.



Planet of the Apes

In the future, apes will run the world. And humans will crouch a lot. Look for it late this year from **Visiware** and **Fox**.



Arena Football Unleashed

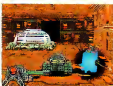
NFL Blitz is a lot like Arena Football in many ways, so after tiring out that once-innovative franchise, **Midway** is now aiming to make the first "extreme" football sport even more extreme.

At its heart, Unleashed is basically like NFL Blitz—anyone who has touched that game should be able to jump right in and throw a few quick strikes downfield without much problem. All of the league's iconic rules (shortened field, goal posts shrouded in nets, and the motion receiver being able to move forward as the ball is hiked) are all in place, in addition to the league's teams and players. Still, Midway has their work cut out for them—they need to make this compelling enough so that it becomes much more than Blitz with a new coat of paint.



Blaster Master

Sunsoft's Blaster Master plays suspiciously like a free-roaming Off-World Interceptor. If you don't remember that game, it's probably a good thing. Here, you take control of a few different weapon- and jump jet-equipped buggies that are great at traversing rough terrain and shooting the hell out of weird-looking aliens. Of course, the requisite power-ups and other bonus items enhance your destructive power in this fall release game.





NEBRASKA FOOTBALL

Now that Preview Editor Dan "Shoe" Hsu has left the magazine, the Nebraska vs. Michigan argument has mercifully been put to rest. Nebraska wins!



Madden NFL 2001

It's going to be really interesting to see how EA tinkers with this year's version of Madden after the last one was so amazing. What we know so far is that EA has gone so far as to license real-life coaches to put on the sidelines, in addition to some teams adopting their philosophies. Also, special "Madden Cards" will be rewarded for feats on the field, you can then trade these cards via memory card. Look for it this **August**.



NCAA College Football 2001

Ah yes, it's time to start thinking about college football again. Our current favorite has undergone a few changes but, for the most part, looks similar to last year's game. Some of the highlights include special moves specific to player's positions, a deeper Dynasty Mode, and several improvements to the running game (not that it needed it). Tweaks have been made to the defensive AI as well. EA will release CF 2001 this **Fall**.



Knockout Kings 2001

You have to love one of the new signature features in this year's edition of Knockout Kings—female boxers. You get the feeling EA is having a hard time thinking of new stuff to add to their big boxing franchise? Other additions include new fighting styles (specific to boxers), an enhanced Career Mode, and a broadened Create-a-Boxer feature. Look for it to land a punch this **Fall**.





TITAN A.E. RESOURCES

Have a hankering to play a game based on Titan A.E. early or just wonder what in the hell this FOX Interactive PlayStation game might be about? Check out www.titanae.com to play a rudimentary game of resource management where you get to pick and design your very own Titan A.E. ship. It's really not very entertaining, to tell you the truth, but it is amusing to see what movie studios try to pass off as interactive these days. The Flash-powered presentation of the site is nice, however, and you can download the movie trailers, which do seem pretty interesting. More so than the online game, anyway.

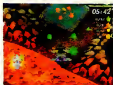
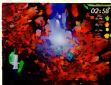
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX

Fans of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, listen up: DMF BMX has some cool features that set it apart. Players choose from Dave Mirra and other freestyle pros, taking their rider from chump to champ, earning sponsors, better equipment, and new bikas along the way. Spend some time ripping your own lines through the different courses (even Camp Woodward's famous Lot 8) and you'll discover secret areas throughout the game. Are the basic tricks not insane enough for you? Pull a hand or foot off in mid-stunt using the modify button, or modify the modifiers for no hands and no feet! Using analog control also allows players to adjust their speed as well as freeze their rider in mid-trick to pan the camera around in a cool instant-replay mode. Acclaim is even trying to fit in a snapshot feature so you can save a grab of your superman to show off to your friends. There are also different multiplayer modes including Sickest Trick and Longest Grind, so players don't have to go it alone. Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX will be grinding it's way onto the PlayStation courtesy of Acclaim coming this winter 2000.



Rock Raiders

Youngsters should have a good time with this simple yet fun PlayStation action/adventure game from LEGO Media. It stars a cast of LEGO spelunkers, as they battle different kinds of creatures, save their chums and recover lost crystals hidden within cave walls. Players can take control of a variety of vehicles, and travel through themed, progressively more difficult caverns. It should arrive in August.

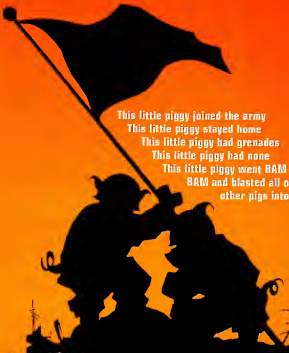


Titan A.E.

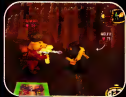
It looks like Fox Interactive has high hopes for their after-Earth animated movie, Titan A.E., as they are gearing up to have a 3D shooter ready to go shortly after the movie's release this summer.



HOGS OF WAR™



This little piggy joined the army
This little piggy stayed home
This little piggy had grenades
This little piggy had none
This little piggy went BAM BAM
BAM and blasted all of the
other pigs into bacon!



www.hogsofwar-thegame.com



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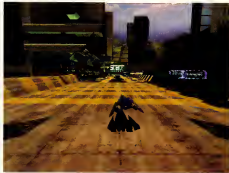
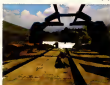


WHAT'S THIS? PS2 IN THE PS GALLERY?!

These Wipeout fusion screen shots are so fresh that we literally got them in the final hour of deadline. Obviously we wanted to include them for all of you to drool over (as we did). And since we didn't have any space in our PS2 section, we threw them in with some PS previews. In any case, enjoy.

Wipeout Fusion

Dear lord—screens of Psygnosis' Wipeout Fusion for PS2! Developed by **Psygnosis' Liverpool Studio**, the game is basically the most advanced Wipeout in the series, both graphically and otherwise. There are a number of new tracks which are much wider than in the previous Wipeout games, and certain courses allow you to race in an open area instead of just on a track (some even allow you to race upside down). There are also new vehicles with advanced handling, weapons and more. It should be out right **around PS2 launch**.



Crash Bash

The N64 has Mario Party. The DC will get Sonic Square. And now the PS has Crash Bash, a party-style title that developer **Eurocom** is readying for a **November** release. In the game's Battle Mode, one to four players compete in arenas, and you get nine four-player competitive events that test your riding, racing and jumping skills. Crash Bash also offers an Adventure Mode, in which one or two players experience platform-style gameplay similar to that found in the previous Crash games.



Spyro: Year of the Dragon

Insomniac is already hard at work on the third Spyro platform adventure, set for release this **November**. Year of the Dragon (working title) follows Spyro and Sparx on an all-new adventure through 30 worlds in their quest to rescue dragon eggs from an evil sorceress. Check out all these added features: boxing, skateboarding, and sharp shooting sections, as well as submarines, tanks, and speedboats you can control.



Who Wants To Be A Millionaire

Don't listen to that snob Alex Trebeck—Who Wants To Be A Millionaire rocks. What's better, this game version from **Sony** doesn't make you crap your shorts when you answer a question wrong, since you don't have thousands of dollars at stake. This 2nd Edition plays just like the show, featuring Regis Philbin with his trademark attitude, over 600 questions and all three types of Lifelines. It'll hit **June 20th** of this year.



BRAWL BETWEEN THE WALLS!



WARNING! This game contains graphic content not permitted in any other football video game.

- 6 on 6 ARCADE-STYLE ACTION WITH NO PENALTIES!
- INCLUDES ALL 17 TEAMS & ARENAS FOR AUTHENTIC HOME GAMES
- POWER UP MODE GETS YOUR TEAM "CHARGED-UP"
- 50-YARD FIELD SURROUNDED BY WALLS MEANS THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE!
- 4 PLAYER SUPPORT FOR WALL-SLAMMING TEAM ACTION!

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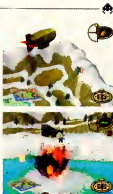
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PREVIEW
GALLERY

Hogs of War

Here's the gist of this one: Take three to six of your best oinkers, lead them onto a 3D battle environment, blow the crap out of another army using lots of interesting weapons, and move on to the next round. The emphasis is on humor (no surprise) and strategy. Weaponry includes sniper rifles, Ripple bombs, Madness gas, Jet-packs, tanks, boats and more. Twenty-five missions and multi-player capability fill out this **summer** release **Infogrames** title.



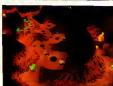
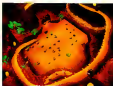
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command

Based on the forthcoming television series, **Activision's** new action game chronicles the "real-life" adventures of Buzz this **Fall**.



Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge

This sequel is being brought to us by **Hasbro Interactive** and **Atari Games**. It features the same basic style of play as the first game, with a bunch of new levels, characters to...uh, hop against, and a multiplayer mode. It's also priced at \$30, so parents won't mind buying this one for the kiddies. Frogger 2 is slated for **September** at the moment. Note: These shots were taken straight from a development system.





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"...This game really got
our juices flowing...
4 Wheel Thunder is pretty amazing!"

—IGN

"...an off-road racing extravaganza!"

—Info

"Four Wheel Thunder ROCKS!"

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BRING ON THE THUNDER!

Midway's Thunder Racing Series continues with a four-wheel frenzy! Choose from one of four classes of rugged off-road vehicles and watch the dirt fly by at a blistering 60 frames per second!

- ⚡ 25+ detailed tracks as well as bonus trucks!
- ⚡ Loads of short cuts and strategic power-ups!
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- ⚡ 2-player, split-screen racing action!

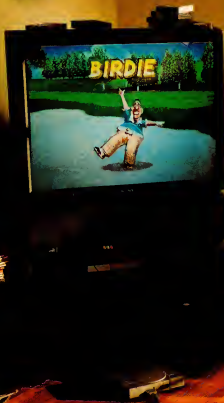
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Racing Game for the
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Thirteen different golfers who'd probably under-tip the valet. Fierce head-to-head, foursome and tournament competition on seven glorious courses. Equipment upgrades for the true fanatic. Swing free, friend. Swing free.

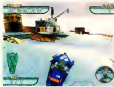


HOT SHOTS
GOLF **2**

GOLF FOR THE PEOPLE.

Sno-Cross

And the parade of extreme snow sports games for the PlayStation continues. This one, courtesy of Swedish developer **UDS**, features three different classes of sleds, all licensed Yamaha vehicles. *Sno-Cross* will also focus on realism, as UDS claims the sleds will handle just like their real-life counterparts, in addition to showing visible damage. The game features eight circuits set in different world locations, a track editor, and vehicle upgrades.



NASCAR 2001

EA hasn't revealed a whole lot about *NASCAR 2001* other than it's a "brand-new" racing game. That could mean a lot of things. New physics, new car models, new graphics? It's a mystery, especially since last year's game was spot-on in many ways. Does it really need to be rebuilt? Offhand, it looks like all the drivers from the 2000 season are present, including the young Earnhardt and Adam Petty. We'll bring you a proper update on *NASCAR 2001* after we see and play it at E3.



Galaga

Hasbro-Atari/Action, is finally bringing out an updated *Galaga* game. This 3D version operates on the same general principle—blow the hell outta invading insects. Look for it in **September**.



Breakout

If you've played any of the **Hasbro Interactive** retro updates, then you have a pretty good idea of what to expect from *Breakout*. It features 3D graphics and fancy effects, but with the same basic gameplay principles as the original game. Of course, some enhancements have been made (some blocks are sheep, it has bosses to fight, etc.). Work your way through a variety of themed environments, blasting through all sorts of blocks. It should be released **later this year**.





A gothic horror RPS set in the late 19th century.

An Epic tale of murder, mystery and maphem.

And Koudełka, a troubled yet strong woman, determined to unravel it all.



KOUDELKA

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DID YOU KNOW?

Alone in the Dark was the pioneer of "Survival Horror" when it landed on the Commodore Amiga and PC in the early '90s. The game was like a spooky Sherlock Holmes novel, though it starred no-name Edward Carnby in a tale inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's writings. Suffice it to say, the game was more cerebral than most of what we're used to today with the likes of Resident Evil, etc., even though Alone in the Dark certainly had its share of gore and violence—and zombies.

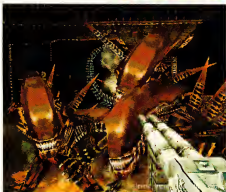
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

It's unfortunate, but very few know that this game was the innovator of the "Survival Horror" genre. Detective Edward Carnby returns in this fourth edition of the series, which, like the previous games, should be as heavy in puzzles as it is horror and action when it comes out this fall.



Alien Resurrection

Fox Interactive and Argonaut want you to kill a bunch of aliens. Amazing they've pulled this off on the PS. Look for it in June.



NGEN Racing

It's the year 2012. The world hasn't seen a military conflict in years. So what do they do? They turn their military jets into racing machines. Race up to 40 different craft, each equipped with a variety of non-lethal weapons (guns serve to slow opponents rather than eliminating them altogether). Fourteen locations feature narrow canyons, bridges and other challenging obstacles. Infogrames will release NGEN this fall.



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NO EJECT BUTTON.



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- Choose Action or Sim Modes to experience the battles in 2 different ways.
- Split-screen 2-player action puts you in the middle of head-to-head dogfights; or grab a wingman to take out the enemy in cooperative mode.



www.eagleone-thegame.com

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Kengo: Master of Bushido

What's this, Bushido Blade 3? Well, almost. Developed by **Lightweight**, the same people responsible for *BBa* and *2*, *Kengo* promises similar free-roaming samurai sword-fighting action. The big difference this time is the addition of a KI (spirit) meter, which slowly drops the more you attack, making patience and timing more important than ever. **THQ** plans on releasing *Kengo* here this **August**.



Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

Imagine Tony Hawk Pro Skater, except with pro BMX riders and bikes instead of pro skaters and skateboards. This **Runecraft**-developed title uses an enhanced version of the THPS engine, and features a variety of tracks, a track editor, various multiplayer modes and more. Of course, players can also perform hundreds of tricks and combos. Look for this **Activision** title sometime closer to the **holiday season**.



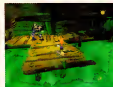
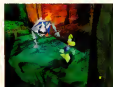
Destruction Derby Raw

After a very long absence, **Pygnosis** has finally decided to revisit their glory days and bring out another sequel in their *Destruction Derby* franchise. The developer even claims that the game includes combo moves inspired by wrestling. Himm, OK. Expect four-player competition, 24 cars, 25 tracks, and loads of "moves" with names like "Bone Cruncher" and "The Undertaker."



Rayman 2

We won't believe it until we actually hold it in our dirty little hands, but **Ubi Soft** swears up and down that the PlayStation version of *Rayman 2* is actually going to be released soon. The first *Rayman* created quite a stir with its breathtaking graphics, but then again that was a 2D game. We liked this sequel on the N64 and DC, but is the PS machine enough to handle it? We'll find out this **Fall**.



Test Drive Cycles

The best thing **Infogrames** TD Cycles has going for it is a shelf-load of licensed bikes. They even have the new Indian 2000 (yes, they're making them again). All together there's more than 35 real bikes divided into Sport, Muscle and Cruiser categories. Staying true to the TD format, the tracks are scattered over 11 locales worldwide. Each race includes five AI riders (except in two-player mode). TDC is a **summer** release title.



Time Crisis Project Titan

Dust off that GunCon! It looks like all those Time Crisis 3 rumors turned out to be true—**Namco's** Project Titan is an original Time Crisis game, built from the ground up for the PlayStation. Don't confuse it with Crisis Zone, the awesome Japanese arcade shooting game also from Namco which hopefully will appear for the PS2 someday. Project Titan is still early in development but it's expected for release this **fall**.



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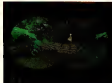
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Army Men: World War

Another month, another new Army Men game, this one due in **spring**. The unfinished version of World War we played stuck pretty close to the Army Men 3D formula—run, crawl and sneak around big outdoor levels, taking out the evil tan army with whatever weapons you can find. The controls need straffing bad, and the graphics could certainly use a boost—let's hope **3DO** is listening.



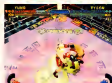
Deuce

Midway is bringing out this 3D action game starring a number two playing card who battles all sorts of enemies in a variety of locations. He needs to save the "royalty." Look for it in **November**.



Mike Tyson Boxing

We won't make any disparaging remarks about Mike out of fear he'll come to Chicago and kick our asses. So here's the straight facts: Over 90 boxers, each with 12 special hits, adorn this **May** release **Codemasters** title. Play modes include: Career, Versus, Showcase and Practice. A special combo system (where you can find and implement the perfect one-two punch) and of course two player support as well.



Rampage Through Time

After World Tour we aren't so sure we need another Rampage, but Midway insists with this very similar-looking upcoming sequel.



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Final Fantasy IX

Square is being awfully secretive about the one game everyone wants to know about. FFX comes out in Japan soon, July 19 to be exact, and they've still only handed out a handful of screens (what you see here is just about every single one released so far) and almost no story or gameplay details. The game wasn't even at their booth at the Tokyo Game Show last month, and when they had only sports titles in its place, angry RPG-loving showgoers looked like they might riot.

What little we do know about Final Fantasy IX shows the series returning to its roots: gone are the guns, factories and space stations of the last few FFs, and in their place are the "super deformed" (i.e., huge-headed and small-bodied) characters, crystals, dragons, four person party, and medieval swords-and-sorcery setting typical of the earlier games. Even the ol' black mage, with his oversized yellow hat and dark blue robe, is back in part IX.

Hopefully we will get more specific info this month at E3, along with more screens of actual gameplay to help pass the time until FFX makes it here this fall.



Maestromusic

Need proof that the Japanese industry is running out of music-themed game ideas? Look no further than Maestromusic—the world's first and only orchestral-conducting simulator. Just pick up the special custom baton controller (pretentious moustache and stuffy British accent not included) and wave it along to the notes on screen, Beatmania-style. Look for it in Japan this summer, and as for a U.S. release? Yeah, right.



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GET CLOSER TO GOD THE HARD WAY



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TEST DRIVE V-RALLY™





PREVIEW



PLAY THE LOST METAL GEAR GAME

God bless the Internet. If you'd like to play a fan translated English version of the elusive MSX Metal Gear 2 (the real sequel to Metal Gear that never made it to the U.S.), check out this Web site: <http://www.stack.nl/~mth/msx/solideng/>

Metal Gear Solid

Publisher:	Konami
Developer:	KCEJ
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action/Adventure
% Done:	100%
Release:	April
Also On:	PlayStation (sorta)
Web Address:	www.konami.com www.metalgearsolid.com

The Good: The gameplay of the PS version has been retained, as well as an original story line.

The Bad: The incredibly long, text-heavy cinematics.

And The Way: Snake's cigarettes are now "Foggers."



The rather expansive story is told through cutscenes like this and long radio transmissions on your Codec.

This pint-sized version of MGS has a surprising number of features, including a full set of VR training missions.



MORALITY

The Fogger



Tales of the morality requirements for Nintendo games are not exaggerated. Though Nintendo has loosened up a little, allowing characters to exclaim words like Christ and God, and make references to homosexuality and drug use in Metal Gear Solid, the big N still has some hangup about smoking.

In the screen above you'll see the "Fogger." No, it's not a game about a small reptile trying to cross a busy highway. It's actually a smoke-emitting device that allows Snake to see infrared beams and look decidedly like the Marlboro Man.

So stop smoking and go get yourself a fogger. You'll be a better person for it.


The Game Boy Color seems an unlikely candidate for a sequel to one of the biggest games in PlayStation history. Nonetheless, the latest game in the Metal Gear saga has found a home on everyone's favorite 8-Bit portable game machine, and—surprise—it's actually good. It's been seven years since Solid Snake destroyed Metal Gear at Outer Heaven. However, thanks to the American government, the Metal Gear menace is not a thing of the past. Research has continued on the bipedal nuclear tank, and when the plane carrying Metal Gear is hijacked, the government needs Snake to return to Outer Heaven once again to stop the terrorists and save the world. Sound familiar?

What's odd about the Game Boy version of Metal Gear Solid is that it seems to take place at the same time as the PlayStation game, even though each one has its own completely different setting and story. Campbell and Mel Ling both make

appearances in the GBC game, though Snake acts like he's never met Mel Ling before, just like he'd never met her before in the PS game. The whole thing is presented as though the stories are taking place parallel to each other.

Otherwise Metal Gear Solid on the GBC encapsulates just about every aspect of its PlayStation cousin. From the need to avoid detection and conflict to the seemingly endless collection of cinematics, it's all been shrunk down to Game Boy proportions with relative success.

Besides the story mode, Metal Gear Solid on the Game Boy includes the now-famous VR missions and even a two-player Battle mode. Players can also go back to stages after they complete them in the main game and attempt to get a better rating based on their completion time, rations used and kills.

It may still be awhile until we see the true sequel to MGS for the PlayStation2, but this gem of a Game Boy game should at least make the wait a bit more bearable. 



Use your "Fogger" to find and avoid infra-red tripwires, just like in the PlayStation version of MGS.

SNEAK 'N' PEEK

Wondering how you can peek around corners to spot guards and security cameras in this new 2D version of MGS? Just lean up against a wall, hold down the B button, and push the control pad in the direction you want to look, and the screen will pan over a bit. Cool!



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PREVIEW GALLERY

Wario Land 3

Nintendo's antihero is coming back **May 30** for a third adventure. After crash-landing in a strange forest, a mysterious face convinces Wario to help recover his treasure. No doubt Wario will want it for himself in the end. This sequel has a golf mini-game which is required to get past certain parts of the game, and as usual, there's plenty of puzzle solving and exploration. Leave it to the big N to make a GBC game that looks this good.



T-Rex

T-Rex has several innovative features. For starters it's the only real-time 3D game for the GBC. In this first-person shooter you battle Dinosaurs and Robot Droids on 15 different levels. Here's the interesting part, the link cable allows players to deathmatch...that should be interesting. Look for this **Eidos** game in **August**.



Warlocked

Believe it or not, this Warcraft-inspired realtime strategy game from **Bits Studios** and **Nintendo** is about as robust as similar games on the PC. You get more than two dozen detailed one-player missions to play as either humans or beasts, and plenty of innovative two-player stuff—including infrared character trading and head-to-

head link-up. And get this: When you turn the game on for the first time, it randomly decides what kind of Wizard you receive (the Wizard is the most powerful character). In order to get other types of Wizards, you have to trade with friends. This is the kind of stuff we want to see on the GBC. Look for it in **July**.



The Jungle Book

You are Mowgli in this GBC version of Walt Disney's classic *The Jungle Book*. Five lush and expansive areas allow you to mix and mingle with all the same characters from the movie. Mowgli must learn special moves to mimic his foes and progress through the game. Look for this **Ubi Soft** title in **October**.





**WHEN YOU'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIRESTORM,
WITH THE FREE WORLD COUNTING ON YOU TO SINGLE-HANDEDLY FOIL A TERRORIST NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE,
KICKBALL STARTS TO SEEM A LITTLE SILLY.**



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ive by the Sword;

(Also pillage, plunder, hack, slash)



The Rock Monster,
Yalta Desert

*"From stone to sand, by
the force of my blade."*

LEGEND OF THE

BLADE MASTERS



Die by the Sword.

and conquer by the sword.)

Trial of the Worms,
Wizard's Cave

*"Green is for the precious
life that I take from thee."*

Date with Queen Arachnid,
Elven Forest

*"If only her exoskeleton
was as tough as her will."*

Otanka Conslought, Kelts


*"Fire in their bellies hath
my strike released."*

- Quest-Based Action RPG For All Gamers
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- Immersive 3D Environment and Free-Roaming Camera
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Sega  Dreamcast

ROSE





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Sega Dreamcast
IT'S THINKING

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Illustrations by Pixel Pushers Design

Sega's got the strategy (free Dreamcast?) and the games (Sonic Square?) to swipe a legion of gamers from the competition (6 million?)

Greg Thomas, Sega's lanky vice president of product development, appeared especially enthusiastic when we talked to him at the Game Developers Conference in early March. His exuberance seemed misplaced, considering that Sony, only a week before, had sold its entire initial allotment of Japanese PlayStation2s in a weekend, while Microsoft had just unveiled the X-Box across the street to a crowd of developers awed by the prototype's considerable power. "Technology just keeps getting better and better. That's what it does," Thomas told us, dismissing the competition. "But for the first time in video games, the revolution is not about visuals. It's network. I look at the Dreamcast

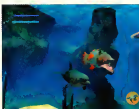
and I say our biggest deal is network."

And now we know what he was so excited about. Less than a month after we talked to Thomas, Sega announced the formation of a new company, Sega.com. Staffed by the crew who runs Heat.Net at now defunct SegaSoft and the folks working on the current Sega.com Web site, the new company is Sega's most formidable weapon in its battle against Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft (we'll tell you why in a bit). To that very big gun, Sega's publishing an arsenal of games that will dominate every genre. Sega gave us early access to its lineup of games for this month's Electronic Entertainment Expo, and you'll find exclusive info on all of these second-generation titles later on.

But first, get this: Sega wants you to



Ecco The Dolphin
Defender of the Future



experience these games on a free Dreamcast—as long as you play by certain rules. The new company, Sega.com, is more than just an Internet destination for DC info and gamer chat; it'll also offer a full-fledged Internet service provider called SegaNet, which will go live in the U.S. this August, with an official launch on Sept. 7. If you agree to sign up for a two-year commitment to SegaNet—at \$21.95 a month—Sega will send you a \$200 check and a free DC keyboard. You can spend that money on anything, and this deal's legit even if you already own a Dreamcast. Current DC owners can sign up for SegaNet, get their check in the mail and splurge on games. New DC buyers can use the check to cover the cost of their system—in some cases, just minutes

after they buy it. "Many retailers are now able to handle in-store registration," said Peter Moore, Sega of America's senior vice president. "You can go to the checkout counter, pay for your DC, then go to a second counter and do the registration process and receive an immediate refund."

Like any other ISP, SegaNet will also work with your computer. PC owners who commit to the two-year contract will get a free DC and keyboard, and they can use their account interchangeably between their Dreamcast and computer. But rebates aside, why commit to paying \$21.95 a month for two years—a grand total of \$527—for a new ISP when you can probably find a local provider for half the price or just stick with one of the big boys like Sega's current ISP partner, AT&T WorldNet? Short answer: Sega's designing SegaNet strictly with 3D online gaming in mind.

The network infrastructure, being built by GTE Internetworking, will reportedly offer enough access points so that you're always within one hop of a game hub when you play online—as opposed to most ISPs, which keep you five or six hops away. A portion of Sega's proprietary KAGE network API will reside on each server, too. "When

someone plays a KAGE-based game, the network goes, 'Cool, I know exactly how to make it go faster,'" said Greg Chiemingo, Sega.com's vice president of marketing. It could all make for narrowband performance several times faster than what you'll find on ISPs not tweaked for online gaming.

"Because of the chaos of the Internet, it's generally said that your tolerable latency for online games is between 200 and 400 milliseconds for any action," Chiemingo said. "What we'll offer SegaNet customers playing on a Dreamcast is something much better than that." Sega.com president and CEO

Brad Huang said to expect latency below 200 milliseconds. Although you'll be able to play DC games online with whatever ISP you're using now, SegaNet promises to run them with much less latency.

Sega plans to have as many as 12 online games available by the end of the year. Chu Chu Rocket is already up and running, and Parlor Games—which packs 3D versions of checkers, card games, etc.—hits early June. But the big stuff will debut the same time SegaNet

launches. Expect Quake III: Arena to inaugurate the network, followed by NFLzKs in early September. After that, we'll see Sonic Square, NBA zKs, Tebris, Magic: The Gathering, Black & White, Railroad Tycoon 2, Half-Life and other third-party games by the end of the year, with the epic Fantasy Star Online scheduled to kick off 2001. The first massively multiplayer games will follow. By the time Sony just begins to unveil the bits of its broadband network, Sega's content will have fully embraced online play. "Our new games are built with network at their core," Thomas told us.

Sega.com is also building partnerships with music, movie and other entertainment companies to deliver content other than



Jet Set Radio

games. A VMU MP3 player will debut in September for under \$100. With slots for two 64 megabyte ScanDisks, the gizmo will hold about two hours of music you can download from the Internet or rip from CDs played in the DC. "We also have a deal with MP3.com to create a Sega virtual record label," Chiemingo told us. "So users will be able to go on there and vote for their favorite songs, and the top two songs will find their way into a future game." We'll see these more ambitious network plans fall into place at the end of the year, when Sega releases its ethernet adapter. At the same time, Sega.com will announce its partners for a new broadband network infrastructure.

But right now, Sega says \$6K narrowingband is the only connection worth supporting. They claim Sony and Microsoft are jumping the gun by focusing on a broadband-only network. Sega.com's top brass point to a

"Our new games are built with network at their core."
—Sega's Greg Thomas

report by New York research firm Jupiter Communications that says, by 2003, less than 25 percent of the online population will connect via cable modems, DSL and other broadband connections. And if you think Sega's burning money by giving away free DCs, think again. If Sega.com can convince the 2 million current U.S. DC owners to commit to SegaNet, the company will make \$1 billion. And Sega is so confident in its triple threat of free hardware, fast network and great games, that it expects an installed base of 6 million U.S. DC owners by next March. That would mean more than just huge profits from SegaNet subscriptions, advertising and license fees—such an installed base would set up Sega as a major contender in the coming hardware battles, instead of a company fighting for scraps.

At the very least, Sega's plans have intrigued the competition. "We all agree that the online-multiplayer aspect of gaming is really exciting," an SCEA spokesperson told us, adding that Sony has already formed its own online company, PlayStation.com, in Japan and will announce its network plans in due course. "The hardware giveaway component of Sega's announcement clearly reflects ebbing confidence in a platform with limited shelf life and comes as recent software releases show no sign of spiking sales of the console." Robbie Bach, senior vice president of Microsoft's home and retail



division, had a similar take on the situation. "Clearly, online play is a major part of the future of gaming and X-Box is designed to drive that trend," he told us. "While Sega's approach is interesting, we think that exciting, interactive gaming on video game consoles will require broadband support and the local storage that X-Box will provide with its ethernet connection and 8-gigabyte hard disk." Nintendo, meanwhile, sees SegaNet as a sign of desperation. "I think it was a bold move for them, but I also think they had no other choice," Perrin Kaplan, Nintendo's director of corporate affairs, told us. "The Dreamcast was a nice surprise. It's had some success, but it hasn't made enough of a dent in the market share to sustain Sega as a company."

Of course, Sega believes otherwise. It's devoting 40 percent of its E3 floor space to SegaNet. The rest of its booth will be filled with games you'll find in the following 30 pages. Ultimately, it's these second-generation titles that'll lead Sega's charge against the competition. "The best games better win," Thomas said. "Because if the best games don't win, I quit. I absolutely don't want to be around if this turns into the movie industry, and all you do is watch stuff. I want to play stuff."

Where the heck is Sonic Adventure 2?

Last month we promised the first screens and info on the hush-hush sequel to *Sonic Adventure*. Unfortunately, Sega of America told us too late that the timing wasn't right to unveil a *Sonic Adventure* follow-up in this issue. In Sega's words, "While we had heard that there may be a new *Sonic Adventure*-style game ready for E3, we discovered after the May issue of *EGM* had already gone to press that the featured *Sonic* title at E3 this year would be *Sonic Square* (tentative title). We're very excited about this game and glad we could show it to *EGM*'s readers first." So when will SA2 finally surface? We figure the game's absence from Sega's E3 lineup is a good indication we won't see this sequel until next year.

MSR

SONIC

Here it is: Sega's secret E3 weapon. It ain't *Sonic Adventure 2* like you probably thought, but it is a *Sonic* game and—more importantly—it supports network play. *Sonic Square* (tentative title) is a multiplayer experience that'll no doubt draw lots of comparisons to *Mario Party*. In fact, some members of the crew who developed *Mario Party* are working on this game.

Due for U.S. release this fall, *Sonic Square* features *Sonic* and his entire roster of sidekicks and enemies, as well as several new characters. Most notable among the new guys is Void, the game's main villain, who has locked up the power of special crystals called Precloustones. (Wanna see Void? That's him on our Table of Contents page.) It's up to you and three other players to compete in *Sonic Square*'s mini-games and see who will be the first to get the Precloustones. Characters will also have unique abilities to aid them in the quest, although we're not sure yet how those powers will factor into the mini-games. All the classic *Sonic* collectibles—especially coins—will be crucial to the gameplay, as well.

Like *Mario Party*, *Sonic Square* includes several themed boardgame-style maps, on which players move their characters by choosing cards. The boards are covered with meandering tracks of color-coded and iconic spaces. It's these spaces that determine the general types of mini-games players will engage in when everyone's done moving their character. If all four players land on spaces of the same color, they'll engage in an every-marsupial-for-itself mini-game. If two players land on one



SQUARE



color and the other two land on another, they'll pair off in two opposing teams. If one player lands on a color other than everyone else's, that player is "it" in the mini-game and everyone tries to avoid him or her. Of course, the field will also be littered with penalty spaces, power-up zones and other specialty areas. Again, if you've played Mario Party, you pretty much know the play mechanics we're talking about here.

The game's producer in Japan tells us Sonic Square will pack approximately 50 mini-games. Expect a lot of twitch stuff—plenty of Track 'N' Field-style rapid-fire button tapping. You'll also play, for instance, a shooting-gallery game set in the wild west. And we've seen a few contests that have everyone racing around expansive environments and bounding off bumpers—all in four-player split screen.

Sonic Square offers a Story Mode for one player, a Battle Mode for two to four players on the same Dreamcast, and a Network Mode for two to four players across the Internet. Sega told us the mini-games played online in Network Mode are mostly the same as the ones played in regular Battle



Mode. And we've been assured that we'll see no lag in Network Mode. "The offline gameplay stays intact," the game's producer told us.

Sega has opted to apply Jet Set Radio's stylized "celshading" graphics routine to all of Sonic Square's characters. So, as you can see from these early screens, Sonic and company share the same cartoony style as JSR's skatepunks. It's a wild touch of visual flair that'll look even better when you see the game in motion. And all of the gameboards are presented in full 3D, too, unlike Mario Party's pre-rendered maps. In fact, Sega is emphasizing that Sonic Square will be a much different experience from Nintendo's premier party game franchise. Considering that Mario Party never let players in Peoria, Ill., compete in a minigame against opponents in Tokyo, we tend to agree.

Some of Sonic Square's mini-games will even feature boss battles. Note that the game is early in development and may look different when Sega releases it this fall.





QUAKE III: ARENA

With a release window of late August/early September, Quake III: Arena will conceivably be the first game to put Sega's new network through its paces—so you better believe it'll be a better-than-flawless translation of the ultimate PC frag party. The product of a partnership between publisher Sega, Activision and developer Raster Productions (who brought Quake II to the M64), QIII is being ported under the watchful eyes of John Carmack and crew at id Software—just above those watchful eyes, to be exact. "The guys at Raster are actually on the floor right above id's offices," said Scott Hawkins, QIII's producer at Sega. "The id guys are there all the time, day in and day out. They're totally behind this project."

QIII will hit the Dreamcast with all

the single-player trials and multiplayer modes—namely Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch and Capture the Flag—of the PC original. It will keep many of the same level maps, as well as include several new arenas. Up to four players can battle each other in split screen if they don't feel like going online for network play.

But Internet deathmatching is QIII's main draw, and the DC version will let up to 16 players duke it out online. The developers are currently tweaking the game's interface to make picking a game server as user friendly as possible. "The menu screen is similar to the way the PC version does it where it lists different servers or different games you can join," Hawkins explained, "but we've changed some of the information on that screen. Instead of listing different ping times, it

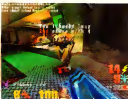
actually displays a little colored meter. It'll be different lengths and colors depending on how good the connection is. It will automatically disregard games that are not going to give you optimal gameplay."

Sega also announced that owners of the DC QIII will be able to play against gamers on a PC—although, according to Hawkins, that feature might not make it into the final product. "I know it has been announced that we're supporting that," he said, "but we're still looking into that. At a minimum, PC users will have to download some type of patch. Technically, we're pretty sure we can do it. As long as it's a good experience for both sides, we'll definitely put that feature in there."

QIII will support a variety of control configurations, including one that lets you use your joystick and keyboard in tandem, much like the mouse-and-keyboard setup PC Quake freaks are so fond of. But will you be able to use a mouse? "I know we are looking into supporting it," Hawkins answered. "And if Sega does release a mouse here, we'll definitely support it in the game." Our prediction: Expect Sega to release a mouse in time for QIII.

The DC version will look at least as good as the PC original. It'll pack new textures and support all the major effects, including curved surfaces, while running at a solid 30 frames per second. You'll even find special VMU

Unfortunately, we didn't get DC Quake III shots this month (but we sure did try). Hawkins told us it will look just like the PC version seen here, though.





Unlike the other 2K1 games, **World Series Baseball 2K1**—due this fall—is being developed in Japan and won't support network play. It will, however, pack all 28 ballparks and updated Major League Baseball Rosters for the 2000 season.



NFL 2K1 / NBA 2K1



display functions, such as messages that pop up during gameplay, a frag counter, an in-game compass and more. But what'll really set this version apart is its collection of characters and the novel, seemingly Pokémon-inspired way you'll open some of them. Locked away on the GO-ROM will be many Dreamcast-exclusive QJII characters. You won't be able to open these guys by playing solo. The only way to get them is to go hunting on the QJII servers. "Let's say you go online and see this character you've never seen before," Hawkins explained. "If you can frag that character online, then it will unlock in your version so you can actually select that character in future battles."

Hawkins said Sega and Raster will leak these character models one at a time on various servers or perhaps even during special E3 tournaments. Players who unlock the characters in the tournaments will then pass them on in regular games, and eventually the new characters will trickle down to all the servers. "We're gonna be pretty flippant about how many characters there will be," Hawkins said, "but it will be very cool and a great way to encourage gamers to go online."

Just don't expect to see any familiar blue hedgehogs running around the arenas. "We've been talking about having Sonic as a hidden character," Hawkins told us, "but legal's not too happy about it. No one wants to see Sonic fraged."

While Quake III Arena will surely lure the die-hard PC deathmarching crowd to the Dreamcast and SegaNet, it's gonna be NFL 2K1 and, later in the year, NBA 2K1 that'll bring in the masses. Due at the beginning of September—probably within a week of Quake III Arena—NFL 2K1 will offer the same basic modes as last year's model. Team rosters, of course, have all been updated (Bruce Smith is now in the Redskins, for instance). NBA 2K1 will have new moves, such as a swat block. But the big addition to both games, of course, is network play.

And here's the really cool news—NFL 2K1 will let up to four players on one Dreamcast go against four players on another. So you can invite over three pals, pick a team, choose your positions, then go online and take on another group of dudes across the country. You'll be able to pick plays together and strategize in the privacy of your own home, without your opponents looking over your shoulder. Expect the same option in NBA 2K1.

Four players running, leaping, tackling and intercepting in 3D on a single Dreamcast sounds like a lot of data to cram through the system's 56K pipeline, but NFL 2K1's developers assure us that narrowband is more than up to the challenge. "I've heard

reports online where people are saying, 'Oh, they only have a 56k modem, so the game's probably only going to have an online coach mode or something,'" said Greg Thomas, who aside from his product-development duties at Sega is also president of Visual Concepts. "I'm reading that stuff and I'm laughing because we're playing the game over the Internet right now and have been for over a month. There's no jerkiness, no lag. Everything's perfect and smooth. We're not sending enough data to cause a bottleneck at all."

Thomas said NFL 2K1's online gameplay is already locked at 30 frames per second, and there's even a chance Visual Concepts will get that number up to 60 FPS for the final version. (Sega's already demonstrated the game's smooth Internet play to industry reps at a recent Las Vegas retailer summit.) It's an impressive feat—especially considering that NFL 2K1 is Visual Concepts' first online game. "Whereas a lot of other people are used to using DirectPlay or this or that," Thomas said, "we just kind of wrote our own book on this because we've never done it before. I think that gave us a leg up."



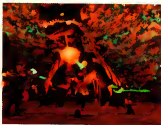
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE



What's a PS2? The buzz at the recent Tokyo Game Show was all about Phantasy Star Online.

scattered around it to be triggered at once in order to open. It looks like Sega is treating the multiplayer aspect of PSO as more than just a gimmick.

With these kinds of ambitious ideas, and the incredible graphics you see here running smooth, without a hint of slowdown or lag (let's wait 'til we see it on a 56k modem though), it's easy to see why PSO was the game everyone was talking about at the Tokyo Game Show. Check next month's News Section for an interview with Sonic Team's Yuji Naka and more PSO Info.



Until now, all the benefits of those incredibly addictive multiplayer online RPGs—angry teachers and bosses, broken marriages, alienated friends and family—have been restricted to the PC community. But soon Dreamcast owners, not just in Japan, not just in America, but all over the world will get their own chance at ruining their lives with Sonic Team's foray into the genre, *Phantasy Star Online*, set for an early 2001 release.

Although it's still in the early stages of development, a recent demo at the Tokyo Game Show (the same demo all the screens you see here are from) gave us a pretty good idea how the game will work: First, four characters—each displayed on their own screen from their own perspective—meet in a large, futuristic city (the game only supports parties of four characters). After saying hello and introducing themselves, they decide to team up and go after a Boss monster. As they chat, the text is displayed in Japanese on some of the characters' screens and English on others, highlighting the fact that gamers all over the world will be able to play PSO together. You can either type in your messages via the Dreamcast keyboard, or choose phrases from a preset list (a la *Chu Chu*

Rocket) and the game will send the appropriate translation to the other players. In other words, when Hirochan says "CAICHA" from his apartment in Osaka, it shows up on your screen as "Hello."

Next the party sets off into the wilderness and soon comes across a group of praying-mantis-type beasts. Battles in PSO take place in real-time, with players free to move and attack at will. In the demo, two characters held back and fired long-range rifles and spells at monsters while the rest of the party charged in to fight with swords and spears. Teamwork and cooperation will obviously be an important part of PSO—and not just in combat. One sequence we saw had a huge metal object blocking the party's path; after a single character tries unsuccessfully to move it, a second player comes up to help and together they push it out of the way. Another section had a door that required multiple switches



SPACE CHANNEL 5

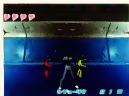
With a possible MTV show and other Hollywood deals in the works, Sega's got big plans for Ulala (pronounced ooh-la-la), the sassy miniskirted star of Space Channel 5, due here in June. But even if her celebrity never sputters to life, this newsgal of the future will always be remembered for her flashy debut title. A rhythm-driven game similar in play style to PaRappa the Rapper, Space Channel 5 has Ulala taking on an invading army of Gummi-skinned aliens who shake their tentacle groove things to hypnotize and enslave hapless Earthlings. You can only break the aliens' spell by making Ulala match their dance moves through all five levels of the game's retro-futuristic world (think Stanley Kubrick's 2001, except with an injection of flower power).

Ulala even bumps into pop god Michael Jackson—named, appropriately enough, Space Michael—in the final level. He's one of several humans lured into submission by the aliens' herky-jerky dance, and it's up to Ulala to bust him free. A long-time Sega fan (remember Moonwalker?), Jackson

met Space Channel 5's producer and played the game two months before its development wrapped up at the company's Tokyo-based headquarters. "Michael really loved it," said Tetsuya Mizuguchi, Space Channel 5's designer (his credits include Sega Rally 2 and Manx TT). "He wanted to add something to this game, and I agreed."

What followed was a down-to-the-wire scramble for the art team to build a 3D Michael model, animate it and stick it in the game. Jackson sent in a tape of his trademark ooh-hoo-hoo howl, as well as soundbites such as "Thanks, Ulala!" and cries for help. "We wanted to do a lot more, lots of his style of acrobatic dancing and his singing," Mizuguchi said, "but unfortunately there was a limit. The game was almost completed."

Space Channel 5 creator Tetsuya Mizuguchi frequented Japanese clubs to "research" the game's dance moves and funky attitude. Sassy Ulala, however, isn't based on any real gal. Too bad.





FIGHT THE MONSTER.





and night cycles.

All of these fine-brush touches—as well as its deep plot and characters—will make it into the U.S. version. In fact, Suzuki himself is overseeing the localization. “We have currently finished auditioning the English voice actors,” he told us. “Most are American. We also have Canadians. We have 200 voice actors so far.” All dialog will also be subtitled, and street and shop signs will be written in both English and Japanese.

With Shenmue: Chapter 1 done, Suzuki can now focus on the game’s second chapter (as well as his ongoing work on Virtua Fighter IV). But it doesn’t look like the guy will have free time for his Ferrari any time soon. Suzuki’s not even sure how many chapters he’ll need to complete his grand vision for Shenmue—a game he says will only grow more ambitious. “Shenmue is to evolve in the future, just like the first Virtua Fighter did,” he explained. “I met many new challenges in Shenmue and it’s turned out to be a fine game, but inside of me it’s still a child, still an infant. It’s still needs to grow up.”



Suzuki said he set Shenmue in the town of Yokosuka because it reminded him of rural Japan so years ago. “It has a special atmosphere,” he told us.

Speed has always been a theme of legendary Sega game designer Yu Suzuki’s life. A sports-car fanatic, he’s the man behind every breakneck arcade classic from Hang On to Daytona USA to F355 Challenge. But, oddly enough, it was Suzuki’s first console-only game, Shenmue, that slammed the brakes on his fast-paced social life. “When I was making this game, I was always tired,” the 43-year-old designer told us. “I really didn’t have the strength to drive my Ferrari. So I was driving my automatic-shift car.”

Suzuki’s sacrifice paid off. Shenmue: Chapter 1, released in Japan last December and due for U.S. release this winter, is an epic title that combines numerous play styles into an adventure unrivaled in its scope and attention to detail. The plot centers on Ryo Hazuki, a young Japanese man seeking answers behind his father’s mysterious death. Set in Yokosuka, a small rural town, the game packs its own working weather system and a population of more than 300 yokels who respond to proper day



JET SET RADIO



that, the game packs a story filled with plot twists; it's not just spray, run, spray, run.

Graffiti designs come in three sizes (and you can even edit your own designs; more on that later). The larger your design, the longer it takes to spray it—and the more cops you'll have hot on your tail. "When you first start out," Vorlick said, "no one's around. You spray once or twice and the cops come. Spray a few more times and they send in reinforcements. Spray a few more times and they send in the captain. Depending on the level, they sometimes send in parachute troops or SWAT teams. Basically, at the end of the stage you're running from every type of police force possible."

The trick system is simpler than what you'll find in Tony Hawk. Depending on your speed, angle of jump, etc., you'll perform one of several tricks per character. Grinding is automatic when you leap onto a rail. "While grinding, you can jump and do tricks," Vorlick said. "Jump and you'll do a flip, and if you spray while doing that your character will twist around and do another trick, then spray, then land back on on the railing."

The Japanese version of JSR contains three massive cities—each crammed with pedestrians and traffic—to wreak inline havoc in, but the U.S. version will contain a fourth metropolis. Cities are divided into several sectors. Depending on the current mission, you can access other sectors by skating to

the edge of your current area. Terrain types include train tracks, parks, residential areas (where you can skate on rooftops) and back alleys. "In some levels you can actually go through buildings as shortcuts and secret areas," Vorlick said.

JSR gives you 30 characters to choose from, and each has his or her own set of tricks and graffiti designs. Better still, you can make your own designs with a special graffiti editor, which lets you type in words and dress them up with a variety of effects. Although you don't get any multiplayer modes or network play, Sega is planning to provide downloadable extras for this surfcore blockbuster soon after its release this fall.



Jet Set Radio's designers created a special program called "Celshader," which renders black outlines around polygons to give your character a hand-drawn look. Expect lots of games to copy this revolutionary art style.

At first gander, Sega's extraordinary-looking Jet Set Radio—due here this fall—may seem like a stylized take on Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, but don't think you've figured this unique title out that easily. "The development team [which includes veterans of the Panzer Dragoon and Sega Rally games] kinda wanted this game to be a genre breaker," producer Clayton Vorlick told us. "They didn't want it to be classified as another skating game. And it's not a racing game. There isn't one specific goal."

Instead, Vorlick says JSR assails you with several simultaneous objectives. Whizzing around town in special "Overdrive Magnetic-Motor Skating Shoes" (the 21st century's answer to inline skates), you spray graffiti at specific tag points such as cars and walls throughout your turf and pull off tricks—all while evading cops and dodging rival gangs. An onscreen arrow guides you to the next tag point, as well as scattered safety zones where cops won't touch you. On top of



SEAMAN

Fear not (or, perhaps, be afraid)—developer Vivarium's oddball life sim *Seaman* is indeed coming to the States this fall, but not before Sega immerses the little fish dude in American culture with the help of Jellyvision, creators of the outrageously witty *You Don't Know Jack* games. "We took *Seaman* over to visit Jellyvision," Osamu Shibamiya, the game's localization producer, told us. "He got the chairs a little wet, but they did have a lot of input in what *Seaman* is going to talk about and were very helpful in shaping his impressions of the United States."

The game itself will play essentially the same as the Japanese version.



You'll raise *Seaman* through various life stages, then chat with the guy via the included VMU microphone. "This will be a very different *Seaman* in terms of the conversations he has and the observations he makes," Shibamiya said. "He'll be a lot more talkative than in the Japanese version. He's got a lot more to say now." But don't expect radical alterations to *Seaman*'s look or attitude. "The way he says things is pretty much the same," Shibamiya continued. "He's still the same fish."



ETERNAL ARCADIA

The Dreamcast's library of first-party RPGs has yet to inspire awe in fans of the genre, but that'll change this winter when we get *Eternal Arcadia*, the first of the two high-profile role-playing epics Sega's readying for U.S. release (the other being *PSO*). As a member of the Blue Sky Pirates, you take on an enemy nation bent on conquering the world with its airship armada. When you're not bumming around towns on the standard 3D field map, you're soaring between floating

islands in your airship, which you guide with the analog stick while the L and R triggers control altitude. Battles are random and turn-based, and you'll nab special moon stones you can mold into weapons or wield as magic spells.

Eternal Arcadia is lush, with expressive characters and a soaring musical score. But it's not just the presentation that's convinced us this'll be a triple-A title. Members of the *Phantasy Star* team are crafting *Eternal Arcadia*, and you can't ask for a better design pedigree than that.

MSR

Bizarre Creations' *Metropolis Street Racer*, which Sega will publish this fall, has built a lot of buzz among racing-game fanatics—even more than *Sega GT*. And it's not just "cause this thing packs 60 cars (which were chosen because they were within the price range of most ordinary Joes). It's not just 'cause everyone who's played this game raves about the tight control. Simply put, no other racing game has matched the authenticity of MSR's real-world locales. "In the Pacific Heights area of San Francisco, for example, we had to model each street, each building and even each garden!" said Sarah Dixon, Bizarre Creations' business director. "As a general rule of thumb, anything over one meter in size should be there in the game." To capture the realism, the guys at Bizarre collected more than 35,000 photos, compiled over 40 hours of research videos, and flown at least 250,000 air miles for research trips.



ECCO THE DOLPHIN

This is definitely not a game you would want to rush through," said Gergely Csarzar, producer of *Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future* (due this fall). "It has its own pace, and the focus is on enjoying the environments, exploring them, and learning new things."

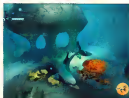
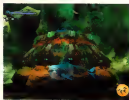
To hear Csarzar explain it, *Ecco* sounds like it's half adventure game, half something you'd see on the Discovery Channel. Heck, the development team at Appaloosa Interactive even scoured nature documentaries and taped 50 hours of dolphins in the wild to help nail the game's true-to-life look. "Our goal is to create the visuals to match the quality, the colors, the beauty of *National Geographic*," he told us.

But that's not to say *Ecco*'s some touchy-feely edutainment title. At its heart you'll find the same gameplay basics established by the original Genesis *Ecco* games. You'll turboboost into enemies and jab 'em with your bottlenose, as well as manipulate switches and other obstacles to solve puzzles. You'll master *Ecco*'s jumps and mammal-outa-water acrobatics, including tailwalks across the ocean's surface. You can morph into other animals at key points to pass obstacles. You'll encounter futuristic machinery, blasting currents and an enormous variety of sea life you can tickle with *Ecco*'s sonar. "You can talk to all mammals in the game," Csarzar said, "but turtles, sharks—especially enemies—won't communicate with *Ecco* via text. Depending on *Ecco*'s

actions, whether he sonars these animals or bumps them or chases or swims around them, they'll change their behavior accordingly."

Appaloosa has essentially created a living environment teeming with intelligent sea life, and it's your job to figure out how to coax these creatures into helping you solve the game's many puzzles. During the course of your adventure, you'll explore four oceans—and these seas are massive. The coral reef in the first world, for instance, stretches a mile-and-a-half long and one mile wide. Some levels can take as long as six hours to complete.

In all, *Ecco* should pack about 50 hours of gameplay, said Csarzar. But with such novel gameplay, fascinating worlds and a story crafted by sci-fi author David Brin, *Ecco* seems like one game you won't want to end. 🐬





Look for Army Men™ on



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Review Crew

This Month...

You may notice two big changes this issue: First, Shoe and Che are gone (we miss you guys!), and in their place sits a whole mess of new names on the Crew. Don't worry, we had had them all checked out—they're cool. (Except for that Canadian, Sewart. We're still running DNA tests on him.) Second, there are only three reviews per game. Here's the deal: With so many titles to review each month (usually more than 30), there just ain't enough time for four people to play each game enough to fully review it. We debated long and hard but in the end decided three well-informed, comprehensive reviews are better than four with one or two half-assed. We figure you'd agree. 🐱

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards



Platinum Awards go to games that get four 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards**.

The Players...

John Davison

John's month included ridgets, go-go dancers, alcohol, being sick, school buses with blacked-out windows and Gary Coleman. Rock & roll baby.

Favorite Genre: Action, Racing

Mark MacDonald

Fresh from *The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine*, Mark was shocked to learn there are other game systems, like the Dream-Cast and Gaming Boy.

Favorite Genre: Action, Adventure, RPG

Chris Johnston

Our globe-trotting news hound has found a new addiction—Samba De Amigo. But it's hard to type with maracas in your hands. Shake shake shake!

Favorite Genre: Adventure, Puzzle, Music

Dan Leahy

Dan's beloved Tribe has been chasing Zani's Red Sox for A55 9005 supremacy. If the Little Injuns get by Boston, look for a sweep in the Fall Classic.

Favorite Genre: Sports, Action, Fighting

Kraig Kujawa

The sameness in sports games is beginning to make Kraig's mind numb. Next-gen sports games can't get here quick enough as fast as he's concerned.

Favorite Genre: Sports, Action, Strategy

Andrew Pfister

As this semester draws to a close, Andrew is anxious for Eg to arrive. He has exams the week after, so he'll be studying while in line for *Fantasy IX*.

Favorite Genre: RPG, Action

Cyril Wochok

Cy's finally forced his way into the review crew. He's been an A.D. for years, but his first love has always been game testing. He says all games are DK this month.

Favorite Genre: Driving, Action, Adventure

Crispin Boyer

Crispin's the guy who, like Shawn, didn't quit EGM. While Shoe and Che ride the dotcom gravy train, Crispin is backing for Cyril's boffin game-ster job.

Favorite Genre: Action, Adventure

Shawn Smith

After some serious thought, Shawn has decided to become EGM's on-site Puzzle Game Editor. He figures it would be the easiest and most rewarding choice.

Favorite Genre: Action/Adventure, Puzzle

Dean Hager

Getting ready for the Eg rush has put Dean in a pinch. He hasn't had enough time to ride his vintage mini-bike...Yeah, he still likes it a lot.

Favorite Genre: Sports, Racing

Todd Zuniga

Todd's been settling in nicely at Wristley Field this spring, but what a pleasant distraction the dominating St. Louis Blues have been. Cup bound? Zani thinks so.

Favorite Genre: Sports, Action, Adventure

Joe Funk

Joe put his landmark chirp study on hold and came out of the trees to help out with reviews. We had to retype it all, though, since it was all grunts and hand signals.

Favorite Genre: Hittin' Shovin' Fist!

Greg Sewart

We could barely get our new guy away from Ridge Racer V long enough for him to get some actual work done this month. Canadians need strict discipline.

Favorite Genre: Racing, RPG, Adventure

Jim Cordano

Due to his antihistory laws of Pokémon, A.D. Jim also bum rushed the show to have a crack at Pokémon TCG. This frightens some, but don't worry, he's all man.

Favorite Genre: Action, Puzzle, Driving

Game of the Month



Perfect Dark

3.165

What an incredible month for games. In this corner you've got Resident Evil Code: Veronica, an awesome new addition to the series and one of the best Dreamcast games so far. For the PlayStation there's Vagrant Story, a fantastic-looking and great-playing action/RPG. And what's this? Metal Gear Solid for the Game Boy Color? Maybe there's some life left in that system yet. Most other months, any one of these could have earned Game of the Month, but Rare's Perfect Dark just blew us away. Most of the crew agrees this game delivers the best single-player shoot-a-thon ever, and no game matches its multiplayer options. 🐱

EDITORS' CURRENT FAVES

- 1** Perfect Dark
Nintendo
- 2** Resident Evil: Code Veronica
Capcom
- 3** Ridge Racer V
Namco
- 4** Metal Gear Solid
Konami
- 5** Star Wars: Episode I Racer
LucasArts
- 6** Vagrant Story
Square Enix
- 7** Kirby 64
Nintendo
- 8** MDK2
Infogrames
- 9** Tony Hawk Pro Skater 1+2
Activision
- 10** The Ribbon
SCE



Star Wars: Episode I Racer



Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: LucasArts
Featured In: EGM #329
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Incredible sense of speed
Worst Feature: No tablet mapping feature
Web Site: www.lucasarts.com



Now this is podracin' it seems fitting that the most exciting sequence in Episode I has spawned the best game based on the movie. Racer on the Dreamcast is a direct port of the PC version, which results in a far better game than the PS2 cartridge. It does succumb to the same problem that plagues almost every PC-to-DC port: quick and dirty conversion. While the game is a beautiful, fast and exciting experience, it's a shame that LucasArts didn't take the time to optimize it a little for the Dreamcast. The simple craft and level models make the DC version feel like it was made for low-end Pentium computers. Even so, Episode I Racer won't disappoint any Star Wars fan who craves to relive the speed and excitement of the racing sequence from the movie. The frame rate is fast and smooth, creating an awesome sensation of speed. Playing through the championship mode allows you to unlock dozens of tracks, new podracers and drivers. Couple that with the fact that you can buy Pod upgrades with your winnings and you have a seriously customizable racing game on your hands. The two-player mode suffers a little in the frame-rate department, but it's still fast and furious racing. Players can even upload their top scores to the Sega Web site. All in all, this is a game that Star Wars fans will play no matter what the reviews say, but it's also a game casual racing fans should definitely check out.

Greg

At first glance, Racer's incredible speed will make you jaw drop. In fact, I've never seen a faster racing game on the consoles. The graphics are pretty good, too (except for a couple of chunky textures). Once you play Racer for a while though, the excitement will dull. Basically, it's a low-bones part of the PC version. So that means the courses are very interesting, there are a lot of pods and pod upgrades and the AI is ridiculously easy until later levels. That's more or less the story. The game does have a couple of DC-exclusive bits and whistles—specifically, the ability to post high scores and talk to other Racer charms online. Not a huge deal, but kind of neat.

Shawn

Ah, finally a game that restores my belief that The Force can exist in a good video game. Racers are a dime a dozen these days, but I have to say that this is a unique racing game with its own merits outside of the Star Wars license. Sure, it helps to have "Duel of the Fates" trumpeting melodramatically as you scream down turns, but it's only icing on the cake. Plenty of well-designed tracks keep the game interesting, and I think the learning curve is just about right—which is important since this is a very fast game. But really, it was slamming young Anakin's pod into a wall at 600 mph that really sold me on Episode I Racer.

Kraig

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**

Maken X



Publisher: Sega of America
Developer: Atlas
Featured In: EGM #330
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Ability to change characters
Worst Feature: Repetitious gameplay
Web Site: www.sega.com



While most first-person games strive to perfect a realistic 3D world, *Maken X* seems content to offer a bare-bones variation of the genre, albeit with some pretty visuals. You can run, jump and look around, but there is very little interaction with the levels, save hitting really obvious switches over and over. I really would have liked to see much more interaction with objects and scenery. The graphics look pretty good, but it only makes you wish for more complexity. That is definitely a shame, given that the Dreamcast hardware is the most powerful box of chips out there right now. On the positive side, the game offers a few interesting twists, such as being able to leap into the minds of different characters, thus giving you new abilities and interesting weapons to toy with. The controls stay roughly the same for each one, making the transition a painless one. Also, you can build up your character over time (through kills) to increase his strength during battle. The RPG-ish character-building elements of the game and the ability to control new characters gave *Maken X* a good chance to present an interesting story, but here it also falls short. The cinematics are better-sketched, never really delivering the punch necessary to give you the feeling that *Maken X* is more than a sum of its parts. Moreover, the repetitious (and often droning) music and sounds do little else but punctuate *Maken X*'s mediocrity.

Kraig

The plot in *Maken X* is ambitious to the point of absurdity. With so many little twists and turns it becomes more humorous than intriguing. Factor in the generic voice work and it's something fit for ridicule on Mystery Science Theater 3000. Well, maybe not that bad. To be fair, it did eventually warm up to the game but it felt similar to playing Doom with no guns. The environments look great (lots of nice surface effects, among other things) but are a bit short on interactivity. Multiple paths and endings are a good idea however. In the end, *Maken X* is interesting to a point but patience is required. Definitely rent before you buy.

Dean

There's no doubt *Maken X* is a pretty game—awesome character and weapon designs, with a silky-smooth frame-rate—but there's just not enough technique to the gameplay. Outside of some interesting boss encounters, it's mostly killing enemies over and over in a similar fashion each time, and maybe flipping a switch or two along the way. The brainjacking feature is a good idea, but it doesn't really add up to anything enough which character you play as. An interesting story (what's up with those voices though?) and multiple paths and endings help, but more variety in the levels and gameplay is what *Maken X* really needed.

Mark

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**



MDK2



Publisher: Interplay
Developer: BioWare
Featured In: EGM #328
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Gorgeous visual, dark humor
Worst Feature: Some might not "get" the humor
Web Site: www.mdka.com



The original MDK was misunderstood—partly because no one knew what MDK actually stood for, but mostly because its dark humor and unusual wit was way over the heads of a lot of people. Great game. Not great sales. Fortunately though, the guys at Interplay knew they were on to a good thing and pushed ahead with a sequel. The premise is the same (it's a 3D, behind-the-curtain shooter with added sniping), the story line is almost identical (aliens invade earth, must kill aliens) but this time it looks better, is more involved, and more importantly it's bigger. The main change comes from the fact that you now get to control the three eponymous characters: Max, Dr. Hawkins and Kurt (MDK, geddit?). Max is a psychopathic, six-legged, gun-toting dog, and represents the "mindless shooter" aspects of the game. Dr. Hawkins represents the think-'em-up puzzle-solving sections while the leather-clad, silly-hatted Kurt now provides the stealthy more Meta-Geekier portions. The three characters are woven effectively through the ludicrous story very effectively and the actions of each have a tangible effect on what you see and do when playing another role. Think of it as an "intelligent" action game, and then give thanks for the splendid visuals which really are stunning. It's always cool to see something distinctive and unique, and MDKs will probably be the most stylish game in your collection for some time.

John

The first MDK was pretty innovative in a word sort of way—if not graphically, then because of its simple yet fun gameplay. Part two has more of the same—and then some. There are simply tons of enjoyable and challenging puzzles and action sequences to work your way through. The game really captures a certain off-Bit feel, and puts it into 3D (just be wary of the platform jumping bits). Aside from this, the main difference is the graphics. Where the first MDK used the power of the PS1 to create surreal, almost glitchy-looking environments, the DC offers amazingly colorful, detailed levels that really show off what the system is capable of. It truly is gorgeous.

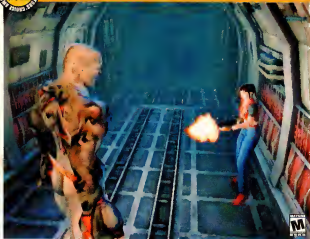
Shawn

BioWare has done an excellent job taking the cool parts of the original MDK and expanding upon them. The game boasts some excellent and distinctive visuals, but this is now matched with an involved story line that is both witty and somewhat abstract at the same time. There are some great gameplay mechanics utilized throughout, and I really live the way the three main characters all behave and play differently while still maintaining the basic feel of the game. The humor may be a bit wacky for some, but everyone can appreciate what a damn fine-looking game this is. The bosses especially are truly spectacular.

Dean

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**

Resident Evil Code: Veronica



Besides the little love story, Code Veronica's plot is excellent. It steals from a couple of movies (*Psycho* and *The Thing*), but what do you expect from a game originally inspired by *Night of the Living Dead*?



Since this game is unfortunately already out in stores as I write this (Capcom just sent out the English version this month and we don't review games based on imports like the other mags), all of you fall into one of two groups: those who have played Code Veronica, and those who haven't. Let me address you separately. To those who have already played it: Great game, isn't it? Those are definitely some of the best graphics I've seen on the Dreamcast so far, and Resident Evil all in real-time, with cutscenes on the fly and the camera moving all around—wow. I could have done without the heavy-handed subplots, but overall the story is probably the best of the series so far, don't you think? Hey, remember that boss at the end of disc 1? Yeah, that poor kiddo. As to those who haven't played it: You need to give this one a chance. Maybe you've tried a Resident Evil or two before and they weren't your cup of tea, or maybe they just never interested you, but this might be the one that converts you—you've seen it happen to a few people already. Not that Code Veronica is very different from the previous games, but it takes their best parts (spooky atmosphere, challenging puzzles, intense zombie-blastin' action) and wraps them all up in one incredible-looking package. The game does lag at a couple points with too much backtracking, but it's still the best adventure game for the DC by far, and one of the best for any system. **Mark**

Like any great Resident Evil game, Code Veronica takes you to intensely creepy places, introduces you to interesting new characters, then kills them. This is vintage RE gameplay packaged with 3D visuals so slick you gotta wonder if PS2 games could really look much better. Despite some lovey-dovey sappiness, the plot is pure dynamite, and the overall adventure runs deeper than past RE games. I gotta say, though, that at least one puzzle is too tricky, and you'll run into key points where you're up cap creek if you packed the wrong weapons. But for every annoying quirk, you'll find dozens of scenes and plot twists that make you go, "Wow—this rules!" **Crispin**

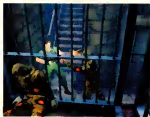
When I first heard about this game, I figured it'd be a cookie-cutter survival-horror title thrown together just so there's a RE on the DC. Nothing could be further from the truth. What a difference real-time graphics make. Not being able to see around corners, watching as the camera pans to reveal a horde of undead...it creates real tension. I never thought the DC would've been capable of this level of graphic clarity outside of *Soul Calibur*. An excellent story line, ambient music, and a lot of genuine "Jump out of your seat" moments make it not only a great game, but the best of the series thus far. Turn off the lights and knock yourself out. **Chris**



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom/Sega
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pak, VMU
Best Feature: Incredible graphics
Worst Feature: The sappy love subplot
Web Site: www.capcom.com



Pound for pound, zombie for zombie, giant, mutated boss for giant, mutated, boss, Code: Veronica is the best Resident Evil so far, and a must-play for any Dreamcast owner. It's true that, as far as gameplay features go, there's really nothing new here—in fact it's missing some of the cool new things RE3 had. But Veronica makes up for it in just about every other way. First of all, as you can hopefully tell from these screens, this is one of the best-looking games out there, period. And the spectacular graphics are more than just eye candy—they really add to the overall experience. Searching the darkness by the soft glow of your lighter, a swinging overhead lamp casting eerily moving shadows, how the camera can pan like a movie to follow the action or switch right in and out of real-time cutscenes. Resident Evil has always been less about play mechanics and more about setting



After playing as Claire for a while, RECV switches you to her brother, Chris. The dual roles makes for a pretty long game—it took us over 15 hours on average to finish.

a mood the player feels, and all these things help draw you into the game and achieve that effect. The story helps too. There's a few moments where you will snicker at the voice-acting and unnatural dialogue, but the sheer amount of cinemas and a number of interesting twists and surprises will keep you playing. Complaints? Yeah, we have a few. Like how you can get stuck right before a boss without the equipment you need to get past them (don't save in the same slot all the time or you're screwed). Or how there never seems to be an item box around when you need one. Or all the backtracking you have to do. Oh, and one other thing—you can't blow zombies' heads off with the shotgun anymore; what up with that? Anyway, regardless, anyone who's ever enjoyed any of the previous RE games, or adventure games in general—hell, if you like video games at all you should at least give this one a try.



Striker Pro 2000



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Rage
Featured in: EGM #125
Players: 1-4
Supports: VMU
Best Feature: Fun certification mode
Worst Feature: Players auto-switch
Web Site: www.us.infogrames.com



Consider this: The only soccer competition on the Dreamcast for Striker Pro 2000 is the dismal and wretched-looking Virtua Striker 2. So for DC owners who care soccer, SPK2 is really the only answer, and it's a pretty decent game. First, you get a really cool certification mode. You'll be invited to pass a series of skill tests to unlock hidden modes and teams. The skill tests are set up by shooting, passing and playing defense. You'll have 10 challenges per category and the more successful you are, the more you'll unlock. This mode is the best part of the game. But the gameplay is pretty fun, too. Control does have some problems which keep me shaking my head. The players auto-switch to whoever's closest to the ball. **Don't the developers have enough faith in me as a gamer to decide who I want to go after the ball?** I'm constantly dashing the wrong way because my auto-switched player decides he wants to run the show. It's not impossible to overcome; it just takes an annoying amount of time to get used to. The commentary, as usual, a real clamble. You'll hear all the English remarks you'd expect from a live broadcast. The game packs 130 teams, so there are plenty of strange names to memorize and guys to make national heroes. Graphically, the game is really tight. Stadiums look brilliant and the player animations are well done. It's a fine game, and if you need soccer on the Dreamcast, it's your only hope.

Todd

Striker is a good soccer game whose subtle realism doesn't sap fun away from the gameplay. Casual soccer fans can jump right into things and the use of the VMU for on-the-fly formation calling is great, even though most of us probably will never use it. The graphics are pretty good by Dreamcast standards, but there's a few nagging problems. Animation can be jerky, and all too often the players look like they're running on ice—especially when they do sliding tackles that send them flying across the field. I like this game, but **Striker Pro 2000 needs more features, licensing, and polish before I'll be willing to put away my copy of FIFA.**

Kraig

Being a true FIFA aficionado, I probably went into playing Striker Pro 2000 with a slight bias against it. I'm happy to say I was wrong. SPK2 is a realistic affair with deep sim options. **Visuals and gameplay don't set any new standards but don't hurt the game either.** Player control is a little sketchy thanks to a system that automatically gives you control of the player closest to the ball (without a button press), it's frustrating because it really limits some defensive strategies (sawing in the middle, keeping back). In addition to the regular battle on the pitch, the game also offers a unique training mode that unlocks special teams and other goodies.

Don

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

Tech Romancer



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured in: EGM #125
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Giant robot fighting
Worst Feature: A bit too flashy
Web Site: www.capcom.com



Hulling robots. Ain't nothing like 'em. Tech Romancer takes the robots, cool, beefy lip-synched style of Japanese '70s giant robot shows, and turns it into a fighting game. No doubt, fans of this stuff will absolutely eat the game up—especially the various story modes that play out like a TV show with animated cutscenes, various enemy encounters and the like. I was never really into that sort of thing, so it doesn't mean as much to me. But even from an outsider's perspective, **there's something really kick-ass about a couple of giant mech-like robots duking it out with all sorts of flashy, over-the-top attacks.** After awhile, and I imagine this is a universal dilemma—all you really want is a solid fighting engine that'll provide hours of one- and two-player fun. And thankfully, TR has the graphics and gameplay areas covered (although its fighting engine isn't on the same level as Soul Calibur). I like the variety of characters you can select, and the weapons and power-ups you can pick up during a fight (light cannons, defensive upgrades, etc.). There are tons of regular moves as well. Graphically the game is above-average. Mech models are detailed and animate well. Some of the explosions are lame (some look like giant gray turds extending toward the heavens, while others look like some-based stuff from the Super NES). But all in all, I like it. And I'm sure non-hardcore fighting game lovers will, too.

Shawn

This one should appeal to the burgeoning Japanese animation market in North America. Much like Virtua On before it, Tech Romancer takes the huge, nimble mechs that personify the Japanese animation experience and pits them against one another in mortal combat. The massive robots do damage to buildings and leave trenches and craters all over the place as they wage war on one another. The control is tight, as you'd expect from any Capcom fighter, and the learning curve is very user-friendly. **With the help of the in-game moves list you'll be pulling off some spectacular attacks in no time.** Tech Romancer may not be overly deep, but it's a good casual fighter.

Greg

I'm not a big fan of them fancy fighter games, but I like Soul Calibur and Tekken 3. Tech Romancer is one of the rare exceptions. Many so-called "hard-core" fighting game aficionados will scoff at Tech Romancer's unflashy simple controls and manageable move list (you won't need to remember 40 combos to be proficient), but these are the qualities that most endeared the game to me. All right—that, and the fact that the gameplay involves making lots of big, goofy robots (many of which anime fans will recognize) hurt each other. **If you typically don't like fighting games, this is a different one that might change your mind.**

Kraig

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

Time Stalkers



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Climax
Featured in: EGM #125
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack, VGA Box, VMU
Best Feature: Sharp, colorful graphics
Worst Feature: Bland, randomly generated maze
Web Site: www.sega.com



It's almost painful to think that the developer of this game created some of my favorite Genesis RPGs back in the day. As a random dungeon-generating RPG, like Evolution, Time Stalkers tows together a collection of poorly designed corridors and rooms each time you enter a new maze. In order to flesh out your party, it's possible to capture monsters, name the beasts and then release them as allies. They won't always listen to you though—arcs and wyverns can be difficult that way. It's like a pseudo-Pokemon game mechanic gone awry. **The biggest irritation is that Sword, the main character, is set back to level one every time he starts a new area.** That's right, it's like starting the game anew every hour or so. Time Stalkers isn't without its positive points, but they're few and far between. My favorite parts are when protagonists from past Climax titles like Landstalker and Shining in the Darkness make cameos. In fact, some of them are even playable characters. Unfortunately that means only fans of these relatively old games will be able to appreciate them, but oh well. The concept behind Time Stalkers isn't necessarily a bad one. If Climax hadn't decided to throw in some ill-conceived gameplay aspects which totally destroy any sort of play value, the game could have been a decent distraction for a few hours. As it is, only big Climax fans and free-to-play hardcore RPG lovers should bother.

Greg

I thought Evolution was a bit of an RPG, but it's a freakin' masterpiece compared to Time Stalkers. Like Evolution, this game packs a weak story and randomly generated dungeons. (Now there's a trend in RPG design I could live without). On top of that, **you get a lot of bad gameplay elements.** Chief among them: Every time you enter a dungeon, your character starts over at level one—meaning you can't wield the powerful weapons you've already found until you build up experience again. On the plus side, you'll find mini-quests and bonus game galore. This thing uses the VMU for mini games more than any DC title, although most of the games ain't fun.

Crispin

I don't really understand this game. Why is the game's name do you have to start with experience level one and no more than four items every time you enter a dungeon? It's incredibly frustrating. The fighting system is nothing special either. Luckily, it's has a couple of features that make things interesting. First, unlike everyone else I actually like the whole random dungeon thing. It's not terribly innovative, but it spikes things up enough. Same goes for the army of VMU mini-games and bonus stuff (although paying for these extras isn't easy). I also like the way cultures and time periods are fused together in the story. But all in all, it's one to rent.

Shawn

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

I Spy



Publisher: UFO Interactive
Developed: Hunex
Featured in: EGM #30
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.ufointeractive.com

Best Feature: It's nice to be in charge of everything
Worst Feature: It also sucks you can't be in the action

I Spy's quite the hybrid. It's a little strategy, a little RPG and a little action. In a sense, it plays out like an action movie—like an interactive version of Mission: Impossible. But instead of being in the middle of the action like Ethan Hunt, you're behind the scenes like Mr. Phelps, in charge of a group of highly skilled (and kind of cheesy) espionage agents. You tell them where to go, what to do and how to do it. You send your people on missions to obtain items and/or data to trade for money from wealthy, rather important clients. **Sounds cool, and it can be. But since you're not really in the game, things tend to drag on in some levels.** And when you get stuck—or lost—things get worse. Of course, the remedy there would be not to screw up. But when you're dropped down in the middle of a huge, multi-leveled complex with tons of things to look through it's easy to lose your way. If you're in the mood for something more slow-paced than a lot of the stuff that has been released for Dreamcast lately, you may want to look into I Spy. It's well made. For what it is.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	2	4

Tomb Raider 4



Publisher: Eidos
Developed: Core
Featured in: EGM #30
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Web Site: www.eidos.com

Best Feature: Lots of exploration, hi-res graphics
Worst Feature: Too much slowdown, bad control

Lara's first appearance on a Sega console since the original Saturn adventure is medicine to say the least. **New to the DC version is a ton of slowdown, pop-up and fog—no that's just lezy programming.** The control setup is horrible too, requiring you to switch between the D-pad and analog stick to walk or run. It doesn't help that The Last Revelation really isn't much of a game to begin with. An incredibly long and boring quest, with some of the most illogical puzzles I've seen in a video game, awaits those poor souls who plunk down their hard-earned cash for this hack job. Even players who have somehow remained fans of this series over the past few years will be hard-pressed to find much positive to say about this latest edition. It's a shame, really, since it's easy to see that Core was trying to get back to Lara's roots with The Last Revelation, but ultimately ended up with a perfect reason to go back to the drawing board. They need to scrap this premise or totally rework it. Either way, it is a poorly translated, slow-down-ridden version of a poor game.

Breg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	2	2



Excitebike64



Publisher: Nintendo
Developed: Left Field Productions
Featured in: EGM #30
Players: 1-6
Supports: Expansion, Rumble, Mem Pak
Best Feature: Several excellent game modes
Worst Feature: Could be a touch faster
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

Unfortunately I must preface this review by mentioning the Excitebike ROM we were given by Nintendo did not have a working track editor. After a long and sweaty debate we decided that, in the interest of timeliness, we would review the incomplete game. So bear in mind our reviews here can't take into account that potentially very exciting feature. That said, I can get to the good news. **Excitebike 64 is easily the best moto-x game I've ever played and arguably the best motorcycle game ever.** It has three different play modes and all of them are very entertaining. The standard game is full of well-designed tracks (over 24) laden with lots of challenging obstacles and well-placed shortcuts. The bike physics are good enough that perfecting jumps, sliding around corners and even riding wheelies becomes an obsession. The bikes are extremely maneuverable (even in flight) so catching massive air is quite a thrill. A helpful tutorial teaches the fundamentals including: jump timing, coming and effective turbo use. The original Excitebike game is even available in both normal and a great 3D mode. In addition, a Desert Race option and a surprisingly addictive soccer game will keep you entertained for a long time. Oh, and don't forget the HillClimb option—this game is just packed with quality. Multi-player is quite functional as well. I can't say enough about this title. You must check it out.

Dean

I doubt many of the N64 owners will remember the original Excitebike, which is probably a good thing, since this game has little to do with the original. Instead, try to think of games like Wave Race and Beetle Adventure Racing. Excitebike 64 offers the same tight control and unique track design with lots of addictive gameplay. You'll want to take the time to open every secret track. **The soccer, HillClimb and desert bonus tracks are worth the price of admission alone.** My only major knock is the steep learning curve. Other motocross games offer better realism with licensed bikes and riders, but for sheer fun, Excitebike 64 can't be best.

Cyril

Everything old is new again. This is a tried-and-true Nintendo policy when it comes to releasing hit titles for the N64. And outside of a couple graphical glitches and a somewhat steep learning curve, **Left Field has managed to recapture the feel of the classic Excitebike.** Excitebike 64 is the best motocross sim on the N64 to date. Strategic use of the turbo button and landing square on two wheels after every jump is the key to success, just like the B-Bump class. Of course, with a full season mode and infinitely secrets like the Hill Climb and Excitebike 3D, there's also enough to satiate N64 players who are used to a little more bang for the buck.

Clay

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	9	9

Cyber Tiger



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developed: Electronic Arts
Featured in: EGM #30
Players: 1-2
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Sattle Mode
Worst Feature: Analog swing meter
Web Site: www.ea.com

EA is tapping into the world of "ponzo-golf" a little late here, as Mario Golf (and the Hot Shots series on PlayStation) has been out for some time. Being late isn't inherently a bad thing, if you can be better. But that's where Cyber Tiger falls miserably, as it falls well short of the benchmarks set by the competition. The visuals are fine, but course layouts are uninspired and could have benefited from a thematic approach. Gameplay controls are the game's biggest flaw, however, as Cyber Tiger requires gamers to control their swing via the analog stick. Hitting the ball straight and far is dependent on bringing the analog stick straight back until the desired power percentage is reached, and then pushing it straight forward. If you jiggle the stick a little left or right during the swing, the result will be a shot which is a little off line. This method is clever, but it is also inconsistent and frustrating. **The game's best moments occur on the driving range and in battle mode.** On the driving range, a variety of targets allow you the chance to earn power-ups (extra spin, no bounce, extra distance, etc.) for use in actual competition. Battle mode is a quick and amusing two-player romp where players try to bomb their opponent by hitting an accurate shot. It wears weary thin quickly, but a nice extra. True golf buffs will probably appreciate Tiger's presence and the inclusion of live real PGA courses, but video game fans will not feel the love. **Dan L**

Probably the most important part of Cyber Tiger is that you can **crush through 46 holes in about 30 minutes.** That's pretty key, considering how long it usually takes to play through one hole of golf if you're as bad as I am. The secret golf balls that you can get at the driving range add an element of strategy and fun, but what's up with the A button serving as a replay button? When I'm trying to cycle through all the built-in, I'm intent on tapping A to get me there. But instead I get a plethora of replays. It's annoying, and there's no real purpose of making instant replays so incredibly accessible. It's a small gripe for an otherwise decent game.

Todd

If EA was going to mimic anything from Hot Shots Golf (it's de facto standard for console golf games), it should have been the outstanding subtleties and gameplay, not the cartoonish graphics. Clearly this game follows the recent dubious trend of budget-based licensed games that do a better job of milking a celebrity license than delivering a fresh gaming experience. And while Tiger has attracted a new generation of people to golf, **this game lacks any genuine appeal.** Probably the best thing about C is the driving range mode, where you can hit different targets for power-ups. But for now, Mario Golf remains the resident pro on the N64's links.

Joe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	6	5



Perfect Dark

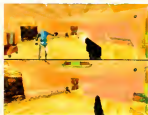
5/MPFS 0.00
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Y/D 100
P/D 0



Publisher: Rare
Developer: Rare
Featured in: EGM #299
Players: 1-4
Supports: Expansion, Rumble, Mem Pak
Best Feature: Limitless multiplayer options
Worst Feature: Stuttering frame rate
Web Site: www.perfectdark.com



No doubt about it: Perfect Dark's got frame-rate problems. Although the one-player game zips along at around 25 frames per second, the Cooperative, Counter-operative and simulant-packed four-player modes can bog down so badly that players accustomed to high-powered PC deathmatching might just chuck. Check out our Chop-o-Meter chart for more frame-rate info, but bear in mind that the game's pretty much unplayable when four humans and eight simulants trade shots in the same arena. But that's OK, 'cause PD gives you so many multiplayer options (most of which you'll open by clearing 30 Challenge missions) that you're bound to find a variation that works for you and your buds. You can combine human and simulant players in any team combination. (Holding A and tapping the Z trigger twice calls up a menu of orders you can issue your



You can choose to play cooperatively on a level-by-level basis. Can't beat mission six solo? Call over a pal and try it together.

(simulant teammates.) Social concerns may have forced Rare to remove the game's face-mapping feature, but you'll still find enough head and body types here to build a decent custom character. The weapons menu lets you pick any mix of guns and gadgets you desire. Submenus let you tweak player handicaps, turn off radar or turn on special *Matrix*-style slow-mo effects. You'll even uncover cheats such as the original GoldenEye weapons and Perfect Darkness, which shuts down the arena's lights and forces everyone to hunt with night-vision. PD lets you do everything short of designing your own deathmatch levels. Best of all, you can save your custom setup to a Controller Pak, name it, then tote it to a friend's house—or transfer it to your Web site via the DeaDrive and share it with the world. Oh, and one last thing: You won't want to play PD without the Expansion Pak. More than half of the multiplayer options are closed without it, and it'd be a crime not to experience this game to the fullest.

No other game tops Perfect Dark's nearly limitless supply of tweakable features. In fact, the sheer number of submenus can be overwhelming at first. You get options on top of options on top of options...



Perfect Dark is not perfect. Choppy frame-rates plague the more ambitious multiplayer modes. But you know what? You'll still want to spend months locked in a room with this mad-asleep first-person training-level packs more stuff to do than most entire games. The blood-soaked one-player adventure is perfectly paced, mature, funny and reason enough to buy this game. And the higher difficulties offer so many new areas, options—even plot points—they make for an entirely new experience when you play 'em. But just as in prequel GoldenEye 007, it's the multiplayer options that'll keep you playing PD until the franchise arrives on Dolphin. The Cooperative and Counter-operative modes—which Rare included at the cost of delaying the game's release four months—get choppy (sometimes to the point of being unplayable), but they're fun and welcome additions nevertheless. You get six different multiplayer games and the option to throw in as many as eight "simulant" bots, who come in their own massive variety of difficulty levels and personality types. But those options are barely the beginning; PD lets you tweak every deathmatch feature you can imagine, especially once you open some of the wider cheats. Everything about PD—from the visuals to the cinemas to the clever weapon design—screens high production values. Rare took as long as it needed to craft this game, and it shows.

Crispin

Hello Joanna, good niddance Bond. Perfect Dark is everything I'd hoped for, I just hoped it'd get here sooner. As usual, Rare has pushed the Nintendo 64 to the limits—this game is absolutely gorgeous. The first-person mode usually moves pretty smoothly, but if you try any of the multiplayer modes the slowdown often gets to be a little unbearable, but that's been one of Rare's annoying trademarks. Fortunately, that's my only complaint—the stung atmosphere and level designs are meticulously put together, and the amount of game modes is simply unbelievable. Rare thought of just about everything, and finally GoldenEye can be put to rest.

Kraig

As someone who thought GoldenEye was over-rated (herey around here), and as a big fan of first-person shooters, I was extremely skeptical of Perfect Dark, but once I tried it I was hooked. This isn't the kind of great game you play for a week or two, finish, and never pick up again—it's the kind of incredible game you live with for months, trying all the different play modes and difficulties, opening up new secrets, and inviting friends over to fight with and against. I still wish the frame-rate in multiplayer was smoother, but the solo and co-op games make this the most ambitious, addictive, and just plain fun FPS I've ever played for any system. Worth the wait.

Mark

Perfect Dark Chop-o-Meter™

- 1-player solo
- 2-player deathmatch
- 2-player cooperative
- 2-player counter-operative
- 4-players with 0 simulants
- 4-players with 4 simulants
- 4-players with 6 simulants
- 4-players with 8 simulants

SMOOTH → UNPLAYABLE

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	9	10



Galeries

Publisher: Crave
Developer: Ascii/Polygon Magic
Featured In: EGM #26
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Story line
Worst Feature: Why so many meds?
Web Site: www.cravegames.com



If only I could give a game a score based on its story alone. If this was the case, Galeries would get a 9 or a 10. Without giving anything away, I really enjoyed the psychic abilities (the offensive kind that make heads explode and those used for solving puzzles), and all of the stuff you could dig up on your parents, and the experiments that were performed on you. There were plenty of twists and turns to keep you sucked into the unfolding drama. Too bad the voice acting sucked. Anyway, like many survival horror-type games, the control in Galeries is a little annoying. You know, the whole walk, stop, turn, stop, walk type of thing. And I didn't like running out of (important (and rather scarce)) items. For example, at one rather tricky point in the game, I found myself out of a kind of medication I desperately needed (not health per say). So I had to go back more than three miles and make sure I conserved the medication for later. Standard fare I suppose, but if this mad is so important, why not have a couple more scattered around? It's more annoying than anything else. I also think the combat system is clunky—different, mind you—but also clunky. Because of the combat and the scarce meds, I suggest avoiding as many battles as possible. Overall, even with its minor problems, the game is very interesting. There's plenty of challenge involved if you're up for it, and the story should leave a lasting impression on your brain.

Shawn

Galeries offers an interesting psychic twist to the survival horror genre, but the follow-through on it is horrendous. In order for a game to be scary, the atmosphere has to be just right. Well, Galeries has the disturbing visuals down pat, but everything else is anti-dramatic in every way possible. The voice-acting is horrific, to the point that you can't take anything seriously, and most of the characters are just silly. To top it off, Galeries sports one of the most annoying load screens of all time—a flashing "Galeries" logo—that pops up everytime you open a door or run down stairs. It's too bad this decent script didn't have a better director.

Kraig

Don't expect a Resident Evil-quality experience from this three-disc survival horror clone. It offers no-frills visuals. Puzzles often come in the humdrum haul-item-A-to-point-B variety. The latter half of the game can get pretty frustrating if you don't conserve crucial medicines earlier on. And the entire game just feels clunky. But that's not to say Galeries has nothing going for it. The entity, Akira-inspired story is gripping, not to mention bloody and soaked toward us grown-ups. Your character's "sense" power is a novel idea that yields some freaky results. The combat system demands clever resource management, although it isn't all that deep in practice.

Crispin

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 5 5 4



Jedi Power Battles

01220 Credits:5

Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: LucasArts
Featured In: EGM #28
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Sound
Worst Feature: Clumsy controls
Web Site: www.lucasarts.com



Until now there wasn't a Star Wars game that involved much saber-whacking, and maybe it should have stayed that way. After playing Power Battles, I wondered if it would have just been easier to become a real-life Jedi than it is to control a video game one. After enduring one of the cheesiest CGI intros to a game, you must pick one of several Jedi to control. Each looks and moves differently, but they all control equally homily. Combat consists of pressing buttons to execute different types of Jedi attacks, some of which are combos. The problem is that the attacks take too long to execute, watering down the action into a chess game where you must block then decide which attack to use over and over again—who would have thought Jedi warfare would be so boring? This wouldn't be completely bad if LucasArts polished things up. Right now, the 3D graphics are incredibly glitchy, to the point that their flatness causes you to die because of disappearing scenery. Checkpoints are few and far between, making these problems worse since you must retrace large parts of the levels. Nothing seems to be flushed out well—even the potentially cool two-player cooperative mode is ill-conceived. The only great part about the game is its superb music and sound effects, but you might as just buy the movie soundtrack CD instead since that's just about all this game has to offer.

Kraig

To its credit, Jedi Power Battles tries to be more than a simple Phantom Menace-flavored beat-'em-up. The developers implemented a control system that seemingly adds depth, while you also get a decent amount of combos and Force tricks for your five characters. Trouble is, the control scheme only works well a third of the time. Locking onto enemies and focusing attacks is fine when only one or two baddies appear on screen. But when surrounded, you must rely on hit-and-run tactics, which become a chore with the loose control (platform jumping's no picnic, either). You can unlock some nifty fighters and mini-games, but they're not worth the frustration.

Crispin

It would've been one thing if the game was either strictly a platformer or a side-scrolling beat-'em-up. But the developers tried to do both, creating a frustrating mix, suffering from shoddy-looking graphics and loose control. Forget about being able to pull off quick jumps or blocks. Seems as if the levels were designed with more attention to accuracy within the Star Wars universe than making them fun. There are a few awe-inspiring moments—like the may-battle duels sometimes replete only with the one kind with your blasters, or being able to deflect shots with your lightsaber. But those moments can't save this game from mediocrity.

Chris

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 9 4 4



MLB 2001

Publisher: 989 Sports
Developer: 989 Sports
Featured In: EGM #28
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: New franchise mode
Worst Feature: As slow as real baseball
Web Site: www.989sports.com



If you've played one, you've played them all. That's the biggest snook against MLB 2001. If you don't mind having outdated rosters (something that drives me crazy—and these game makers know it!) then you're really not missing out on much. My biggest issue, though, is there's not really anything about the game that excites me. It's missing the essential element of baseball drama, partially because of its lack of a risk/reward pitching system. If I get in trouble on the mound, no problem, because I don't need to worry up pitchers before bringing them in. This is a big simulation element that needs to be in there. It's baseball! On the cool end, there's an interesting point-based franchise mode. If you earn enough points (by winning, performing well in the game, etc.) then you can sign high-end free agents, but it only goes on for one season. What kind of franchise mode is that? One good thing is the pitcher/batter interface. If you're looking for a curveball low and in, and the pitcher surprises you with a go-fastball high and away! you'll be hard pressed to catch up with it. But overall, the game moves too slowly. It may be baseball, but there was no poetic license exercised when it came to purging the boring elements of America's pastime. That's a mistake. I hate to say it, but I'm voting for the lesser of two evils when I say Triple Play 2001 is the best baseball game on the Play/Station this year.

Todd

Since the PlayStation's power has been all but maxed out, I must say that it has been particularly hard to distinguish this year's crop of baseball games from last year's. MLB 2001 feels almost virtually identical to 2000's edition—that is to say it's good, but not great. At this point, I wonder if all of the subtle changes warrant another purchase, especially when the rosters aren't even up to date. Triple Play 2001 at least had some wholly new notable features, while MLB also has mostly a slight refresh to the board update that's still playing catch-up with EA's baseball game. What if all comes down to this is a good second-place game, but why settle for less?

Kraig

I'm pleasantly surprised about this year's MLB. Updated rosters aren't the only change in this offering from 989 Sports. Graphically, they've cleaned and sharpened the look of the players, many of whom actually look like their real-life counterparts. A Franchise as well as a modified Spring Training Mode are also new, both of which are welcome additions. Gameplay and other pertinent areas are solid—good, but vary; smart player AI, etc.—now a few complaints. The play-by-play at times, the pitcher interface doesn't like the analog control, and some unique scenarios repeat too often (players caught in run-downs, etc.).

Dman

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7 6 7 7



Publisher: EA
Developer: Eden
Featured In: EGM #129
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Good attention to detail
Worst Feature: Only one brand of vehicle
Web Site: www.EA.com



When all is said and done, limiting a Need for Speed title to a single brand of cars is not necessarily a good thing. It's great if you like Porsches, but for everyone else it's an adjustment. Like most Porsches, but once you factor in all the variations among models, you're getting a handful of unique driving machines. (On the flipside, Porsche fans will deal over the exhaustive selection.) The meat of the game, the Evolution and Factory modes, provides a good amount of story and driving challenges. The tests, while not as strict as those in Gran Turismo, are quite fun and can be mastered in a reasonable amount of time. Transversely the longed-for Evolution Mode is a journey through the history of Porsche. This game definitely takes patience: The early cars are painfully slow, and the races can be monotonous. Still, between this, and the variety of models and tracks, there's a good amount of replay value in this title. Factor in the competent arcade gameplay and decent AI (for the most part) and you've got a pretty good package. A few negatives however—The Pursuit Mode is far less exciting than in years past. It also takes a tap from the car to end the chase. I also miss the long sweeping curves and tremendous power-slides present in High Stakes. Oh, and the music seems really out of place. A few selections sound like country-rock or something. Laments aside, Porsche Unleashed is very good.

Dean

Long before Gran Turismo ruled the roost, Need for Speed offered the virtual driver a chance to pilot the world's unattainable super-cars. After I beat GT, I still played NFS: High Stakes because ultimately, it was just more fun. Porsche Unleashed retains the lush, scenic tracks and forgiving controls, but for me, loses something by only having a Porsche license. Also, what happened to the insane, hyper-aggressive Pursuit mode? Now the police need only touch you to catch you. Porsche breaks will dig the Career and Evolution modes and the chance to drive every Porsche ever made, but I really think that overall High Stakes was a better game.

Cyrl

This ain't gonna win any awards for originality that's for sure. It's pretty much your basic Need for Speed just filled with Porsches. I guess that's either good or bad depending on your level of passion for (automotive) genies. As an educational stab at tracking the history of the merque, the game works remarkably well. After a few hours with it you'll recognize a 356 Roadster and be able to tell what year each gas shape and style originated from. You'll also be able to avoid fines by informing them that the really old Porsche badstubs couldn't top zoom. Aside from this, NFS, which isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Joan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	6



Publisher: 3DO
Developer: JDO
Featured In: EGM #129
Players: 2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Create female players
Worst Feature: Everything else
Web Site: www.3DO.com



Who are the marketing wizards who came up with this title? If the game were an added mode to its baseball cousin, Hit Baseball 2004, it might have garnered a laugh or two. As it stands, 3DO is actually selling this piece of tripe in exchange for 35 or 40 of your hard-earned dollars. Everything about this game is sub-par. The graphics harken back to the first-generation PlayStation days. Sounds are fine, except for the ear-splitting announcer who belows over every insignificant play (e.g. "HE PICKED THE BALL UP, WOW!"). Player models are terrible, but hey, it doesn't stop there. Nope, they threw in really sucky animation and horns, legging camera angles to boot. It's hard to match the excitement of seeing a close play at third base while the camera is still panning the outfield. Of course, that's assuming anyone would be excited about this game in the first place. It'd almost be cool if these were beer-drinking jocks capable of belting every other ball over the fence (like real softball). But these lame-ass teams consist of a politically correct blend of geeks who don't know their cleats from their chins. Throwing and catching the ball is a crap-shoot at best, as the chances for an error on any given play are extremely high. That's supposed to make it fun and wildly unpredictable but it just adds to the frustration of looking at an awful game.

Dan L

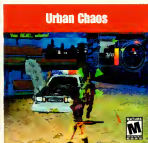
While an interesting idea, I'm sorry to report Softball Slam is choppy and cheesy. Pixels are the primary colors on both the characters and the environments, which minimizes contrast and makes the ball and player difficult to see against like-colored backgrounds. The voice-overs get repetitive after one inning. The worst part, however, is the cardinal sin of a sports game—sluggish control. Even as a game aimed at kids and casual gamers, sluggish controls aren't fun for anybody. While playing, I won the most exciting way a ball game can be won—a job inning home run. Sadly I was more psyched about the game ending than hitting the homer. So it ain't so Sammy.

Joe

This game is one of those bad ideas that ranks above side his and her toilet—except those bad ideas have an excuse for stinking. I'm not sure what annoys me more about this—the stupid license (a hardball hitter for a softball game!), the obnoxious announcer, or the amazingly bad graphics. Loads of more complicated baseball PlayStation games have been made—I don't understand how 3DO could let this choppy, sluggish and ugly game out the door. Did they really think that anyone would want to play with teams full of badly animated misfits in an obnoxious game with very few features? Sammy is stuck on yet another bad team.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	2	1	1



Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Mucky Foot
Featured In: EGM #122
Players: 2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Stealthy, strategic missions
Worst Feature: Poor visuals, clunky interface
Web Site: www.eidosgames.com



If I judged this game on the first half hour I played it, I'd get a 2.0. The improved tutorials at the beginning are frustrating and ridiculously useless (they don't teach you how to use any advanced techniques). The actual game is like GTA, only you're on the side of the law. Control is incredibly jerky and the game locks onto buddies automatically (you can switch around, but it's difficult to tell who you've switched to). If you're up against a group of any more than two enemies and any of them have guns—you're screwed. Controlling vehicles in UC is like driving a bumper car. The graphics are nothing to write home about either. Ambient garbage blowing around is nice to look at, but it would've been better to see more detailed environments. What city has catwalks on top of buildings over streets? One good thing is that the level and mission design are top-notch—lots of 'em and a wide variety. Plus, you can retry missions for time—a nice touch. It's cool that you can go anywhere you want to explore a level, but Mucky Foot did little to create a presentation that's all compelling. There's no music to speak of, the characters are plain, dialogue appears as lines of text at the top of the screen (very "PC-ish"), characters are stereotypes, and there's little reward or visible outcome after completing missions except "good work, Stern!" UC has some good things going for it, but they're hidden under its clunky interface.

Chris

Outside of the sloppy controls and the first generation graphics, Urban Chaos isn't all bad. The hard part is getting past the crap to find the good stuff. The positives include a good overall theme (hunting down criminals in a free-roaming environment) and some entertaining scenarios. Even though I hated the control (especially when using the vehicles) I kept running around looking for more buddies. It's sort of addictive that way. Even so, I encountered a lot of things I didn't like. For instance, many of the clues are vague and confusing. Plus it would've been nice to have a mission win/lose menu. The best I can recommend for Urban Chaos is a one-night rental.

Dean

Whenever publishers ship a title before sending us a review copy like this it usually means the game is total crap, and Urban Chaos certainly has its share of glitches. The graphics are piss-poor—blocky and glib-a-flic, with noticeable draw in, and the stiff controls aren't much better. But it's not all bad; the game design (mixing driving, fighting, and Tomb Raider-style action/exploration) is a fresh variation on the stale 3D action formula, and the edutour story is definitely a nice change. There's some really cool missions you are sent on too. It's just too bad that the game's look and feel aren't up to the same level as the exciting gameplay ideas.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	3	7	6



Vagrant Story



Publisher: Square EA
Developer: Square
Featured In: EGM #349
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Amazing graphics, great gameplay
Work Feature: Nothing
Web Site: www.squawessa.com



Just when you think PlayStation games can't look any better, here comes Vagrant Story. This is the best-looking PlayStation game to date, and the fact that it's a fantastic-playing game doesn't hurt either. It has a really unique comic-book style to it that grabs your attention on the first sequence and doesn't let go, with cinematics done in real time. The combat system is a logical combination of selecting areas to attack through a menu and twitch Action-RPG gameplay. Chain and Defense Abilities allow you to perform attack combos or defend against enemy attacks by correctly timed buttons presses. If you fancy yourself a swordsman you can disassemble weapons and use the parts to create new ones. Weapons gain experience points too, as you use them against different kinds of enemies, but they also degrade over time (you can repair them at shops along the way). There are so many weapons you can pick up that it's almost a shame there aren't weapon shops where you could sell them for loot. Dungeons are huge, and you never quite know what the next room will hold. Music fits the action perfectly—serenically different from Square's FF music, but locked in the same orchestral vein. This is a long game, too—if you take your action RPGs slow and easy, expect at least 30 hours of play. It's almost all combat, as there aren't any towns or people to talk to that'll slow down the pacing. A great addition to any RPG fan's library.

Chris

Vagrant Story is two games done well and rolled into one game. Action (jumping around, block puzzles, timing button presses for combos) and Role-playing (dense story, cool skills system, and tons of unique items, spells, and weapons—not to mention the ability to make and name your own). And the graphics? Clear and detailed, with absolutely no jagged edges or glitches. **PlayStation games just aren't supposed to look this good.** The combat can get repetitive after awhile, and I wish some of the bosses were killed better (you can do long and suddenly get belted by one big attack), but this is still one hell of an action/RPG.

Mark

Vagrant Story was a real question mark for me: an Action/RPG from the group that developed FF didn't sound like a sure thing by any stretch of the imagination. That said, the game has turned out beautifully. **The pseudo-real-time fighting interface works extremely well.** Even though Vagrant Story assumes the beginner with what seems like far too many attributes to keep track of, once you start to understand how the myriad of abilities affect one another it's easy to see the beauty of the game. My only real complaint is that the entire game is simply dungeon crawling and fighting. A town or two to visit would have been a nice touch.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	9	9	6

Vanguard Bandits



Publisher: Working Designs
Developer: Haman
Featured In: EGM #322
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Simple interface
Work Feature: Dated graphics
Web Site: www.workingdesigns.com



At first glance Vanguard Bandits isn't all that impressive. The graphics look extremely dated and the music sounds like it belongs on a SNES cartridge. However, those who give the game a chance will see that there's a lot of depth to be found here. This is one of the few strategy/RPGs with some semblance of replay value. Depending on choices you make and how well the main character, Bastion, performs in battle, there are multiple story line branches. The only way to complete all 56 missions is to play the game a few times. Vanguard Bandits' fighting system is both simplistic and deep all at the same time. It's very reminiscent of Sega's Shining Force games. Frontal attacks almost never do any real damage, while attacking from the rear or sides gives one a huge advantage. Take that simple concept and put it into practice on a wide-open field or a small corridor and it's easy to see how diverse each battle can be. Players also have the choice of defending, avoiding or countering blows depending on how they're being attacked. The biggest problem in the game is that the battles can sometimes run for over an hour, so it gets a little tedious at times. In fact, it can become quite tedious after a while. The story isn't overly interesting either—something Working Designs games usually don't suffer from. Still, strategy fans looking for something lighter than Front Mission 3 should find a lot to like in Vanguard Bandits.

Grog

I'm normally a fan of the games Working Designs chooses to localize, but for the life of me I can't understand why they chose Vanguard Bandits. It's gameplay is based by virtually any PlayStation strategy RPG—Vandal Hearts or its sequel, Final Fantasy Tactics, Kardia. Unlike those games, most battles here quickly degenerate into groups of characters hacking and slashing at close range every turn. The translation itself is great—an excellent job once again by WD. But that isn't going to make what is, at its heart, an average game great. There are plenty of good PS RPGs out there—skip this and go straight to Lunar 2.

Chris

One thing about Working Designs—they do a great job localizing text and telling a story, and so it is with Vanguard Bandits (don't listen to Greg). But unfortunately the plot is about the only remarkable aspect of this game. The graphics are pathetically simple, and the tunes sound like bad Genesis music. Of course in a strategy RPG I could deal with that. If the gameplay was deep and involving, but it's pretty dull to me. **The combat and stages are way too repetitive, and the goal always seems to be just hold it every thing.** Only hardcore fans of the genre should try this old-school dropout, especially with Front Mission 3 out there.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	5	7

Championship Bass



Best Feature: Career mode, fat fish
Work Feature: Soundtrack will drive you insane

Publisher: EA SPORTS
Developer: Pal
Featured In: EGM #330
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.easports.com

For a rather serene sport, talking seems to translate to the video game world rather nicely. EA SPORTS amps the excitement factor just enough with a solid pace of play, intelligent fish, and a Career mode which will keep you coming back. Overall, gameplay is repetitive (cast, reel, repeat) but the experience is different each time. Fish behave in a completely realistic and random manner, requiring the gamer to actively manage all factors involved. Use the night bait, at the right time of day, in the correct fashion, and chances are you'll land the lunker of your dreams. The underwater camera is great until you cast your line, at which time the view seems to get a little too tight. That's a minor complaint, though, and one which accurate casting will remedy. Tournaments are carried off nicely, with five-hour expeditions compressed to take place within an hour of gameplay. Once you've mastered the basics, set out to unlock secrets by meeting goals in career and challenge modes. This adds a lot to the replay value of an already solid game.

Ian

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	7	8

F-1 2000



Best Feature: All the real teams of the F-1 circuit
Work Feature: Overall lack of excitement

Publisher: EA
Developer: Visual Sciences
Featured In: EGM #330
Players: 2-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.EA.com

Whenever I review an F1 game I'm reminded that the balance between realism and gameplay is very important in this genre. Too much realism can make the racing frustrating to the point of abandonment, while too little can cause a game to look and play silly. Most recent F1 titles have toned down their driving gameplay while keeping options and depth intact, and this is essentially what EA has done with F1 2000. Let me add they've done it very well, especially on the depth and options end. Having the full F1 license means there are plenty of recognizable drivers and teams including Alesi, Schumacher, Irvine and several others. The play modes are extensive and include an option to use telemetry analysis—very cool. Another fun detail: the brake disks turn red under heavy use—nice touch. Overall, considering the options, ease of use (especially the menus) and the complete gameplay, I'll put F1 2000 in the top five of PS F1 titles. It'll be higher but the sensation of speed is not (the best five seen) F1 fans should definitely check it out.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	7

Mobil 1 Rally Championship



Publisher:
EA
Developer:
HotGen
Featured In:
EGM #129
Players:
1-2
Supports:
Dual Shock
Web Site:
www.ea.com

Best Feature: Decent graphics
Worst Feature: Incredibly tight car control

Mobil 1 Rally Championship is a niche rally sim with steering so touchy and unforgiving. It makes the original W-Rally seem like a cream puff. This isn't a condemnation, but its ultra-precise handling is far from friendly and will most likely alienate even the most hardcore rally fans if you stray from the road in the least way wheels grab the ruts and send you careening into the woods. The all-important power-slides is truly hit-or-miss. Even if you tilt your slide correctly but happen to just touch the grass, it's all over. To say it's frustrating is an understatement. I can appreciate a racing sim that dictates precise driving, but at some point it must be fun as well, that's where Mobil 1 misses the mark. On the upside, it's not a bad-looking game. The English countryside is represented nicely and, as you can see from the picture, the depth of vision is very good. The cars themselves are detailed, if a little narrow-looking. Still, the decent graphics can't make up for the handling problems. Hopefully next time more attention will be paid to that area of the game.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	4	4

Mr. Driller



Publisher:
Namco
Developer:
Namco
Featured In:
EGM #129
Players:
1-2
Supports:
Dual Shock
Web Site:
www.namco.com

Best Feature: Time Attack Mode
Worst Feature: Is It An Action or Puzzle Game?

Mr. Driller is a puzzle game, but it's also a kind of action game. You drill through blocks, and as you make your way down, blocks from above come falling. You have to avoid these so as not to be smashed, and set up combos to colored blocks match up with other like-colored blocks as they fall. But that's not all. You also have to pick up air canisters along your journey (since you're underground and all). Eventually, you'll make your way to a goal, and score points based on your skills. Obviously, Mr. Driller isn't mindless. You have to be VERY aware of what's above, and what combos you're able to set up. Strange thing is, it's not as thoughtful as some puzzlers out there like Tetris Attack or Kirby's Avalanche. Mr. Driller would hybrid that! Take some time getting used to Mr. Driller, the game can be particularly fun (especially the Time Attack Mode), but all in all, it just doesn't have that special something that makes other, more popular puzzle games as addictive as they are. Give it a chance though—for the right price, it could be a fun one.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	9

Superbike 2000



Publisher:
EA
Developer:
Milestone
Featured In:
EGM #129
Players:
1-2
Supports:
Dual Shock
Web Site:
www.ea.com

Best Feature: Real riders and bikes
Worst Feature: Rough game-play mechanics

Superbike 2000 isn't horrible, but overall it suffers from enough flaws that it falls well below average in the hierarchy of motorcycle racing games. Amongst the fat of problems, it can't decide if it's a sim or an arcade title. The gameplay is far from realistic, yet as an arcade racer it fails to generate any thrills at all. The turning radius is too large making low-sliding, corner-hugger maneuvers tough to pull off. Most of the time you're forced to slow way down and take them in the upright position. You can get cookin' on the straightaways, and it does seem like you're going pretty fast, but once you hit the turns you're reminded of the lackluster gameplay. The other major problem—the bikes won't crash. That's right, they're permanently upright...ugh. Frame-sinks and the resulting janky animation are troublesome. The backgrounds are bland and the sound effects rusted and weak. The list goes on and on. After two tries it's discouraging that this series can't air it. Hopefully next time the game can take a definitive path to be arcade or sim oriented.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	3	3

Walt Disney World: Magical Racing Tour



Publisher:
Eidos
Developer:
Crystal Dynamics
Featured In:
EGM #129
Players:
1-2
Supports:
Dual Shock
Web Site:
www.eidos.com

Best Feature: Cores
Worst Feature: Frame-rate When A Lot Of Stuff Is Happening On Screen

Is this a kid's game or not? It starts off with Jimmy Cricket giving this kid-friendly storybook spiel. Then it dumps to the races, which include all sorts of cutesy Disney World songs and scenery. This is all fine and good—but I can't help but wonder why the thing is more challenging (although not near as enjoyable) as a "grown-up" kart racer like Crash Team Racing. It just doesn't make sense. Speaking of CRT, I don't know if Magical Racing Tour could've borrowed more from Naughty Dog's creation. On the good side, the game does look pretty good, and the control is a tad above average. Unfortunately, there are still problems here. The graphics look great until there are a few cuts or something else going on on screen at one time. Then the frame-rate goes to the crapper, making it difficult to play. And as far as the control goes, the power slide is confusing and makes your racer shift left or right on the screen in an almost buggy sort of way. All in all, parents and gamers alike would be well-advised to stay away from this one. MRT is definitely not on the level of CRT.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	2	7

Bomberman MAX



Publisher:
Vatical Ent.
Developer:
Hudson
Featured In:
None
Players:
1-2
Supports:
Infrared port
Web Site:
www.vatical.com

Best Feature: Traditional Bomberman goodness
Worst Feature: Battle mode is two-player only

This second set of Bomberman games for the Game Boy Color tries to take the Pokémon route, offering two different versions, Red and Blue. Each game contains different characters and missions that are unlocked by—surprise!—trading with another copy of Bomberman. The single-player mode is traditional Bomberman (a good thing), providing a nice variety of mission-based levels. But because of the muted color, it gets difficult identifying enemies that blend into the background. The biggest shortcoming of Bomberman Max, however, is being unable to play Battle mode unless you can find another Game Boy Color (and of course, another copy of the game). The ability to create and battle your own characters using the infrared port is a great idea, but there should still be link-cable support to provide a more reliable connection. Overall, Bomberman Max is a quality title with a few shortcomings. But unlike Pokémon, it's difficult to justify purchasing both versions—there's not enough difference between the two and there's not much incentive to unlock everything.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	6

Looney Tunes Collector: Alert!



Publisher:
Infogrames
Developer:
Infogrames
Featured In:
EGM #129
Players:
1-2
Supports:
Link, infrared port
Web Site:
www.infogrames.com

Best Feature: Different Looney Tunes characters
Worst Feature: Collecting items isn't very exciting

Looney Tunes Collector: Alert!, besides having an odd title, is another game "inspired" by Pokémon. If you like games that allow you to run back and forth all over a world map, collecting items in order to find new tasks—which in turn involve the collection of more items then this game is for you. By itself, Collector Alert! is a pretty decent find-the-items game. But when compared to other action games, it doesn't offer much to keep you entertained. Being able to play as a bunch of different Looney Tunes characters adds a bit of variety, and thankfully there's some semblance of an underlying plot and a reason for collecting stuff. Combat can be a bit frustrating, depending on what character you use (the Daffy Duck/Emer Fudd battle is nice possible). The two player mingles are somewhat entertaining, but the meat of the game—the Adventure mode—is for one player only. There's fun to be found if you're a Tunes fan, otherwise Collector: Alert! (like most other action games on the Game Boy Color) is an exercise in repetitiveness and monotony.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	6	6



Metal Gear Solid



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Featured In: EGM #27
Players: 1 or 2
Supports: Link Cable
Best Feature: Play mechanics of the PS game
Most Fun: Long-winded cinematics
Web Site: www.konami.com

Who'd have thought Metal Gear Solid would translate so well to an 8-Bit handheld? It's truly impressive how well Konami has ported the complex play mechanics of the PlayStation game to the Game Boy Color despite its fewer buttons. Sometimes that means pressing two or three buttons in combination to switch weapons and items, or to use your Code. Once you play a bit, though, the control layout feels logical and becomes second nature. Outside of the obvious hit in the graphics and sound department, this cartridge would make a great game on any system. The story line, which seems to run parallel to the one in the PS MGS, has Snake returning to Outer Heaven to once again put an end to the Metal Gear menace. It's the most intriguing story in any Game Boy game to date, and it's delivered well through a series of cinematics featuring some beautiful hand-drawn art. Unfortunately, the cinematics in this game are just as plentiful and long-winded as their PlayStation counterparts. Even so, it's nice to see that Nintendo didn't force Konami to dumb down the story and allowed them to use a couple of mild explosives and some other PG-13 dialogue in order to keep the Metal Gear feel intact. **Metal Gear Solid on the MGS features all the tactical espionage action that made the PlayStation version a hit, plus totally original story that's sure to please.** Game Boy games just don't get any better. **Greg**

Finally, a big-league franchise on the Game Boy that's actually faithful to its namesake. It's amazing how much Metal Gear Konami was able to stuff into this little cart. You have the stealth elements, the weapons, the items, the codes, distracting guards—there's even a VS. battle mode and a copy of the VR training missions. It's like the old 8-Bit Nintendo and PlayStation Metal Gear games made sweet, sweet love and this was born. The pinnacle of GBC graphics, animation, and sound, with a great story that wasn't dumbed down to a sixth grade level (no offense, sixth graders). This joins Zelda and Pokémon as one of my favorite handheld games ever. **Mark**

Gamers whose first experience with Metal Gear was on the PlayStation might be taken aback at first by the old-school look of this portable version. But make no mistake, it's got the same kind of gameplay that made the PS version a hit (and the guards are less intelligent than ever). Gone are the 3D cinema screens, but it just makes the gameplay stand out even more. And in case you want a quick MGS fix you can go right into the VR Training Missions. Games like this and Nintendo's 8-Bit adaptations like Bomberman Commando, Crystalis and Super Mario Bros. Deluxe are making the GBC the place for updates to classic games. And I say, keep 'em coming. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	9	7

Pokémon Trading Card Game



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Hudson
Featured In: EGM #27
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable, Infrared
Best Feature: Over 200 cards, some GB exclusive
Worst Feature: Spotty AI
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

For the millions of you who are into the Pokémon Trading Card Game, you're going to love the electronic version. No more searching stores or waiting in long lines to buy booster packs. Every American card and most Japanese promos can be found here. There are also several exclusive GB cards to be had. For the rest of you...uh, I never thought I'd be into a card game, but now I'm hooked. **The card game requires much more skill and strategy than traditional Pokémon fights.** The focus of the game is collecting cards, building decks and battling. There is a simple plot involving a quest for the legendary Pokémon cards, and where your character visits eight different clubs to battle a leader and has or her minions. The game offers lots of pre-fab deck designs, but none are as good as the tournament winning decks found on most Pokémon TCG Web sites and magazines. Up to five of your decks can be saved in the laboratory. The in-game graphics have the look and feel of plentiful GB Pokémon games and the card art is reproduced nicely. There are some AI concerns, however, the computer will often just let you win, even in a tight contest. On numerous occasions the computer built up its bench instead of retreating as severely damaged Pokémon right before I took my last prize. I miss the sounds and smells of a real card deck, but when space is limited or there are no opponents around, this is a great substitute. **Cyril**

I am not a fan of trading-card games like this or Magic. When I play a game, at least for the first time, I want to be able to quickly understand the rules and put in a decent showing in the very beginning without having to customize my own freakin' deck or read a huge manual of instructions. So when I started to play the Pokémon Trading Card Game, I became frustrated. No matter what I did or who I went up against, I got royally schooled by a virtually ever-opponent except, of course, the tutorial match. Don't get me wrong, I love the regular Pokémon Game Boy games. But I just can't get into the coin-flip, oops-you're-dead gameplay. **Chris**

Being a huge fan of the original GB game and the Trading Card Game, you might say I was a wee bit excited about a GBC version of the TCG. I was not disappointed. This little gem holds very true to its real-world cousin. It's fun, addictive, and really makes you consider each move carefully. There are a few variations from the real card game (i.e., the number of prize cards vary, and you get no extra cards when an opponent pulls a mulligan hand). But the only true negatives I found were the inability to back out of an attack, length of the opponent's turn, and as Cyril said, the soft opponent AI. All in all, if you're a fan of Pokémon, or just like TCGs, this is a must-have. **Jim**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	6	6

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Natsume
Featured In: EGM #28
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Best Feature: Half pipe
Worst Feature: Awkward trick system
Web Site: www.activision.com

Dumbing down big-name games from other systems to the Game Boy must be some sort of standard procedure with game companies. Maybe kids who don't really play games much, or are just learning how to play, will enjoy the simplicity found in this title. I didn't, and I have a gut feeling any experienced gamer will feel the same way. Sure, I understand there are certain technological limitations that prevent a game like THPS from being ported over intact, but I'd like to think there's some innovative way around (at least some of) these limitations. Take Metal Gear Solid on the GBC for instance—it does the Metal Gear name justice. Outside of the handheld restrictions, there's the issue of fun. When it comes down to it, you simply want a game you're playing to be fun, no matter what system it's on. And these days, games have to be more than just button-pressing mindlessness. Unfortunately, that's all Tony Hawk's Pro Skater is when it comes down to it. Yeah, it has a couple of modes, and all of the real pro skaters, but not much else. It also has a trick system but it's not near as intuitive as I was hoping. In fact, it's downright boring. I wasn't expecting the same incredible play I found in the PS version. But I figured if I'm going to play a game with the THPS name emblazoned on it, it better be darned good. This version might as well be called Xtreme Skater Attack 2000, or whatever. **Shawn**

If I didn't know the name of this no-frills, fun-for-a-while title, I'd swear I was playing the Game Boy version of Street Skater and not Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. **This game packs little of the depth of its console big brother.** The courses are too linear. You feel like you're just racing through them and dodging obstacles instead of linking trick combos. The PlayStation original offered wide open arenas you could explore—why couldn't this version? You can stretch out, massive grounds by jumping from one rail to another, and you can unleash some major rotations on the half pipe, but that's about the only thing this game has in common with my beloved THPS. **Crispin**

Tony Hawk is such a great home game that you'd think they would have put more time and effort into crafting the portable version. Instead, we get a run-of-the-mill skateboarding game that feels pointless, has no goal and isn't half the game its console cousin ever is. It's like whoever developed this game didn't even play the home version to find out what makes the game fun. Tony Hawk was never about racing; it was about performing tricks and racking up as many points as possible. And what is up with the three-life passwords you need to write down and input? The game doesn't even keep track of that much info. Skip this one. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	4	3	3



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Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@xl.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Syphon Filter 2

(For PlayStation)
Level Skip

Pause the game in the middle of play. On the Pause Screen, highlight Map and press and hold these buttons in this order: Right+L2+R2+Circle+Square. With these held, press X. You will hear a sound when entered correctly. Now go to the Options Screen and enter the Cheats option. You'll find an option to end your current level and go to the next one.

Super Agent

Pause the game in the middle of play. On the Pause screen, highlight Weaponry and press and hold these buttons in this order:

L2>Select+Circle+Square. With these held, press X. You will hear a sound when entered correctly. Now go to the Options Screen and enter the Cheats option. You'll find an option to turn Super Agent on or off.

Movie Theater

Pause the game in the middle of play. On the Pause Screen, highlight Briefing and press and hold these buttons in this order: Right+L1+R2+Circle. With these held, press X. You will hear a sound when entered correctly. Now go to the Options Screen and enter the Cheats option. You'll see an option for movies on disc one or two. Move Gabriel up to the Movie Screen and press Triangle to watch a movie.



DREAMCAST Fighting Force 2

Level Select

1 On the Title Screen, while Press Start is flashing, put in Left, Up, X, Up, Right, Y. You will see a flash on the screen if the code was entered correctly. Now choose the Start Game option and a Level Selection Screen will appear. Now you can choose your starting level.

NHL 2K

Black Box Team, Big Heads

2 Black Box Team

Note: Plug a controller into the 4th port and enter these tricks into it. At the Black Box logo, press and hold the L+R buttons. While holding these, press B, B, X. Announcer says, "Oh, Black Box baby." You can choose Black Box as your team.

3 Big Heads

Note: Enter tricks into 4th controller as above. At the Black Box logo, press and hold the L+R buttons. While holding these, press B, A, B, Y. Announcer says, "Oh, Black Box baby." All of the team will have big heads except for the goalie.



TNN Motorsports: Hardcore Heat

Killer Codes

On the Mode Select Screen, press the following button combinations to unlock these new features in the game. You will hear a voice if they have been entered correctly.

More Colors

Down, Left, Up, Right, X, Y, L Trigger, R Trigger.

LE-200s Vehicle

Y, X, Right, Left, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Up.

1 Combat Jet

Left, Right, Down, X, X, X, X.

Wild Metal

Tons of Tricks

Enter these codes during the game to unlock new features (note: Use the D-pad for Right, Left, Down and Up).

Invincibility

Y, Right, B, Left, X, Down

Friendly AI Units

B, Down, A, Down, X, Y

Boost

Up, X, Down, B, A, Y

2 All Weapons

A, A, Right, Y, A, Right

Maximum Health

Down, Down, A, X, B, X

Show All Token Locations

Y, B, A, Left, Down, Down



NINTENDO 64 Hydro Thunder

Super Start and Boost Jump

1 Super Start

At the countdown (3, 2, 1, Go Go Go!), press and hold the A button immediately after announcer says 1. You'll hear "Super Start!" then hit boost.

2 Boost Jump

To jump over an obstacle or to get a boost power-up, just hold the A button and press B+Z at the same time.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Random Locations, Less Falls

2 Random Locations to Begin

Choose Career Mode at the Main Menu and begin game. Press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Left-C, Right-C, Down-C, Up, Down. The screen will shake.

Less Falls

Choose Career Mode at the Main Menu and begin game. Press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Up-C, Right-C, Left, Right-C, Right, Up, Down. The screen will shake if entered correctly. You'll fall less often.

FORCED FEEDBACK

SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR LOYAL SUBSCRIBERS ONLY! EGM 131

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GAME BOY CAMERA FILM FESTIVAL HITS THE NET

As many of you know, we're big fans of the Game Boy Camera—it's the most entertaining paraphernalia we've ever used. In fact, we've run our very own movies right here in the Forced Feedback section, and used Game Boy Camera snapshots in our company holiday card. Well, now it's your turn to have your Game Boy Camera

masterpieces displayed proudly in a film festival, hosted by film student Scot Leach on his Web site, www.freevg.com. "Being a film student I found this little toy amazing. My only frustration was that there was no way to show my masterpieces, unless I carried my Game Boy with me everywhere," Leach mentions on his site. Then he picked up the Mad Catz Camera Link (about \$10) and the rest you'll see on the freevg site... well, with your help.

All you need to do is submit a Game Boy Camera movie by the deadline listed on the site, and make sure all shots are taken with the Camera. Editing can be done and sound/music can be added via a PC in post-production. There are other rules and submission guidelines listed on the site as well. Films will be posted as they are received, and viewers can then vote on them. There will be two winners overall: an audience choice, and an FVG.com winner. Check the site for details, and good luck!



It's about time someone did this. So get online, submit a film and/or check out the site!

"LEONARDO DICAPRIO" STARRING IN RE:C-V

OK, so Steve Burnside from Resident Evil Code: Veronica isn't really supposed to be Leonardo DiCaprio, but he sure does look like him. Steve even has that rebellious teen attitude Leo has become known for thanks to such films as *Basketball Diones*, *Titanic*, and *Who's Eating Gilbert Grape*. Well, maybe not *Gilbert Grape*, but definitely the others. Ward on the street is Capcom wasn't sure if they could run with the Steve character since he looks so much like the Hollywood star (some say Leo is the swing type). Whatever the case, little women of the world will play Code: Veronica again and again the same way they saw hype-fest *Titanic* just to catch a glimpse of Leo... er, Steve.



This one's for the ladies: If you want a little something to think about over the weekend, take a look at the picture above. Hot-as-lava Steve Burnside from Code: Veronica is on the way.

EGM QUICK FACT:

Crispin and Shawn often play the HORSE Mode in *Tony Hawk Pro Skater*. Except they change it to TURDEAT to spice things up a bit.

LIFE AFTER CHE CHOU AND DAN "SHOE" HSU

You might be wondering what it's like to work at EGM now that two of our key guys have moved on to bigger (and some might say better) things. Well, it's a little weird and we miss Shoe and Che dearly, but all in all we're doing just fine. After all, we've recently had several new and extremely talented people join the EGM team—a group who you will no doubt come to love in the months ahead. First, we have **Mark "Da Mock" MacDonald** from Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine fame. He'll take on various responsibilities, including Review Crew, previews and more. Next we have **Greg**

"Canada" Stewart on board from Expert Gamer. He brings a wealth of gaming knowledge to EGM, and a lot of action figures nobody else wanted. Look for him on Review Crew. And finally, we are fortunate to have young **Sam Kennedy** and **James "The Milkman" Mielke** from Videogames.com. Sam will be helping with news, as well as reviews, and James will be reviewing and making sure the game companies out on the West Coast know EGM still exists. As always, we'll keep bringing you the latest gaming news, reviews and previews—except now with some new faces on board.

THE MOST EXCITING PICTURE IN THE HISTORY OF EGM



Art-guy Jimmy Cordano and newcomer Greg Stewart look at a very complicated chart during a recent staff meeting. The chart explained how Che and Shoe were originally hired to entertain the staff during deadlines, but how they eventually started doing real work.



PLAYSTATION

Crash Team Racing

Tons of Codes

On the Main Menu Screen, hold L+R1 and press the following button combinations to get the results as shown. You will hear a noise when entered correctly.

- 1 Unlock Komodo Joe**
Press Down, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Right, Down. You can now play as Komodo Joe in any mode except Adventure.
- Unlock Papu Papu**
Press Left, Triangle, Right, Down, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Down. You can play as Papu Papu in any mode except Adventure.
- Unlock Pinstripe**
Press Left, Right, Triangle, Down, Right, Down. You can play as Pinstripe in any mode except Adventure.

More Tracks

Right, Right, Left, Triangle, Right, Down, Down.

- 2 Invisible Racer (only wheels)**
Up, Up, Down, Right, Right, Up.
- Super Turbo Pads**
Triangle, Right, Right, Circle, Left.



CTR cont.

- 1 Scrapbook Option**
Up, Up, Down, Right, Right, Left, Right, Triangle, Right. After entering one of these next tricks, you will have to reset the game to get a different unlimited object.
- Unlimited Wumpa Fruit**
Down, Right, Right, Down, Down.
- Unlimited Bombs**
Triangle, Right, Down, Right, Up, Triangle, Left.
- Unlimited Masks**
Left, Triangle, Right, Left, Circle, Right, Down, Down.

Die Hard Trilogy 2: Viva Las Vegas

Debug Menu

- 3** At Main Menu Screen, press L1, L1, Circle, Circle, Square, Square. The Debug Menu will appear with options for a Movie Player and Direct Level Access. Watch any movie, or start at any level!

COOL DEX DRIVE SITES

PlayStation:

<http://skyscraper.fortunedcty.com/thapsody/8as/download/dexindex.html>
http://www.geocities.com/dealnd_000/
<http://www.psxmax.com/cheats/dex/index.html>

Nintendo 64:

<http://members.aol.com/Bg6mke/UW/N64/DEXDRIVE/index.htm>
<http://pages.ssnnet.com/darin/gone/n64/air/dexoves/>
<http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Corridor/8556/N64Saves.html>

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the full-on Trickmon treatment:

1. Pokémon (Yellow) (GB)

Easy Level Gals

To easily gain experience, switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When you go into battle, this Pokémon will appear. Switch to another Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon you want to build up has no initial attack in its first form.

2. Gran Turismo 2 (PS)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

3. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (PS)

Awesome Codes

Enter the following cheats while paused during play. If you entered these correctly, the screen will shake.

Big Head Mode

Hold L1 and press Left, Up, X, Down, Up, X.

Special Available Anytime

Hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle.

Get 10x Multiplier

Hold L1 and press Triangle, X.

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HEY, YOU, WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

If your trick is selected as **Trick of the Month**, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct and a Pro Shock, or a Hyper64, or a VIPER controller from Fire International. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. See page 183 for rules.

Note: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

Tricks of the Trade
 P.O. Box 3338
 Oak Brook IL
 60522-3338


or send e-mail to:
tricks@ziffdavis.com





TRICKS


TOP 5 GOLDENEYE 007 BUTTON CODES!!!


Button codes have finally been revealed for GoldEye 007! Just enter these codes during a single-player game (don't pause) with the L and R buttons, C buttons and D-pad. These codes are tricky, so make sure to hold the buttons for about one or two seconds before you go to the next step of the code. We'll show you how to do the first one, with more to come next issue!

- 

All Guns Unlocked
Hold L+R Buttons and press Down, hold L Button and press C-Left, hold L Button and press C-Right, hold L+R Buttons and press C-Left, hold L Button and press Down, hold L Button and press C-Down, hold R Button and press C-Right, hold R Button and press Up, hold L Button and press C-Left.
- 

Maximum Ammunition
Hold L+R Buttons and press C-Right, hold R Button and press Up, hold R Button and press Down, hold L Button and press Down, hold L+R Buttons and press C-Right, hold L+R Buttons and press Left, hold R Button and press Down, hold R Button and press Up, hold L+R Buttons and press C-Right, hold R Button and press Left.
- 

Invulnerability
Hold L Button and press Down, hold R Button and press C-Right, hold R Button and press C-Up, hold L Button and press Right, hold L Button and press C-Down, hold R Button and press C-Up, hold L Button and press Right, hold R Button and press Down, hold L Button and press Left, hold L+R Buttons and press C-Right.
- 

Invisibility
Hold R Button and press C-Left, hold L+R Buttons and press C-Up, hold L+R Buttons and press Up, hold R Button and press Up, hold L Button and press C-Left, hold R Button and press C-Up, hold L Button and press C-Down, hold L+R Buttons and press Left, hold R Button and press Right.
- 

Line Mode
Hold R Button and press C-Down, hold L+R Buttons and press Down, hold L Button and press C-Right, hold R Button and press C-Up, hold L+R Buttons and press C-Right, hold R Button and press Up, hold L Button and press Down, hold L Button and press Right, hold R Button and press C-Left, hold R Button and press C-Up.

WWW.VIDEOGAMES.COM

Hey kids! Mankerin' for some video game news in between issues of *Electronic Gaming Monthly*? Well, get on down to Videogames.com for all the latest info!

WWW.GAMEGUIDES.COM

The ultimate online resource for strategy. And be sure to pick up a copy of **EXPERT GAMER** every month for the latest tricks and strategies.



FIFA 2000

Hidden Super Teams

After choosing a mode of play, go to the Team Select Screen and cycle through the categories until you see Rest of the World. Now move down to the teams and cycle through until you see four

- EA teams (EA's through EA4). These special Electronic Arts teams have very high attributes. For a perfect team, scroll through until you reach a team called Special
- Guests. This incredible team has full attributes.

NHL 2000

Incredible Hockey Players

Under the Advanced Options, select Rosters. Now go to the Player Management option and choose Create Player. From here, you can create high statistic players as shown.

- Awesome Players**
Name your player Peter Forsberg or Joe Sakic. After you do this, it will ask you if you want to create a player like him. Answer "Yes" to this question. Now you can change this player's name, but don't change any other attributes. Create many players like this to get a



NHL 2000 cont.

team with high stats.

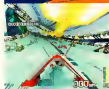
- Awesome Defensemen**
Name your player Sandis Ozolins. After you do this, it will ask you if you want to create a player like him. Answer "Yes" to this question. Now you can change this player's name, but don't change any other attributes. Create many players like this to get defensemen with high stats.
- Awesome Goalie**
Name your player Patrick Roy. After you do this, it will ask you if you want to create a player like him. Answer "Yes" to this question. Now you can change this player's name, but don't change any other attributes. Now you can have a goalie with high stats.

Killer Loop

Killer Codes

On the Main Menu Screen, press and hold the START button. With START held, press the following buttons for these results.

- Class 2 H&K Tripod**
Down, Left, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left
- Class 2 Sinus Tripod**
Down, Left, Up, Left, Down, Left, Up, Right



Killer Loop cont.

- Class 3 Pulse Tripod**
Down, Left, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Right
- Class 3 Reac Tripod**
Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Left, Up, Left
- Class 3 Sinus Tripod**
Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Left (Note: This also opens up Killer Loop Mode.)
- Class 4 H&K Tripod**
Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Left, Up, Right
- Class 4 Sinus Tripod**
Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Right, Up, Right
- Class 4 Pulse Tripod**
Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Right, Up, Left

- 1 Class 4 Reac Tripod**
Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Right
- All Tracks**
Up, Left, Down, Left, Up, Left, Down, Right

The Smurfs

Level Select

- 2** Begin a New Game from the Main Menu and when asked to choose what type of game, press up to see "It's No Picnic." Now press the X button and wait for the cinema to complete. Once you see "Start of the Adventure," press L1, Up, Up, Down, Up, Left, Left, Up, R2. You will hear a harp sound and your



icon will now be all the way over to the last level. Now you can choose to start at any level in between the beginning and the end!

NASCAR Rumble

Tracks and Pro Drivers

- 1** From the Main Menu Screen, choose Game Options. Access Load and Save and move Left for the Password option. On the Password Screen, enter C9P5AUSNAA. All drivers under the pro level will be open and all the tracks will be available, including the bonus.

Triple Play 2001

Announcer Commentary

- 2** During a game, press and hold the L1+L2+R1+R2 buttons. While holding these, press the following buttons to get the different types of quotes from the announcers:
 - Baseball History**
Up, Triangle, Right, Circle.
 - Weather**
X, Down, Triangle, Up.
 - Trivia**
Down, X, Right, Circle.
 - More Batter Info**
Left, Square, Up, Triangle.
- Note: This will only work on certain batters.



Wu Tang: Shaolin Style

All Fighters, Etc.

- 1 All Fighters in Versus Mode**
On the Main Menu Screen, press Right, Right, Right, Right, Left, Left, Left, Left, Square, Circle, Square, Circle. You will hear a growling sound.
- 2** Now go into the Versus Mode and you will see that all the hidden fighters are now available for use.
 - Fearmentor**
In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight RZA and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.
 - Cerith**
In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight GZA and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.
 - Sinesis**
In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight U-God and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.
 - Bone Gear**
In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight Raekwon and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.

TOP 10 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

Triangle.

Get 13X Multiplier

Hold L1 and press X, Square, Square, Triangle, Up, Down.

Slow Mo

Hold L1 and press Left, Square, Left, Square, Left, Square, Left. Get All Practice Mode Levels Hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle. Quit the level you are playing and go to the menu. You will have a 1. Practice Mode levels.

4. Pokémon (Blue) (GB)

Fight Safari Zone Pokémon

This will allow you to fight and catch the Safari Zone Pokémon outside the Safari Zone. To begin, you must have a Pokémon with the Surf Ability. Now go to the Safari Zone and enter the area where the Pokémon you are trying to catch is found. Stay in the section until the time runs out. Go to the Seafloor Islands by surfing south of Fuchsia City. Be sure you don't encounter any enemies on the way, or the trick won't work (this does not include the Pokémon in the water on the way there). On the edge of the islands, there is a strip of the screen that is half land, and half water. Now, surf on this section and just keep going up and down on it. When you run into an enemy, it will be the Pokémon from the Safari Zone section you just left. This time though, you will be able to fight them and use the other Balls.

5. Donkey Kong 64 (N64)

Arcade Donkey Kong

First complete DK's Barrel Blast inside Frenetic Factory. Then a lever will appear. Grab the lever in front of the Donkey Kong Arcade game to play it. Now you must win the game by beating all of the stages (four in all). After you do this, boot the game once more to obtain the Nintendo Coin. Now, take pictures of six frames with your camera. After returning to the Main Menu, go to the Mystery Menu and you will see an option to play the Arcade Donkey Kong game at any time!

6. Pokémon (Red) (GB)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!



TRICKS

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The number to call for strategies & game info

It's a pre-view. Must be 18 years or older. Code is not for parent approval.

73%

The amount of respondents that feel classic games should be rereleased poll results from video-games.com

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

7. Spyro The Dragon (PS)

99 Lives

In the middle of the game, press the SELECT button and then press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Circle, Up, Circle, Left, Circle, Right, Circle, START. Your life counter will increase to 99!

8. Gran Turismo (PS)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

9. Pokémon Pinball (GB)

Animate Unevolved Pokémon

If you want to animate the Pokémon you've caught, go to the Pokédex and highlight one of the regular, unevolved Pokémon. Now press and hold the Start button to see the character move!

10. Crash Bandicoot WARPED (PS)

Free Apples

When you are playing a level that has the rock-throwing monkeys, after you have destroyed the vases that they occupy, you can jump on the monkeys and get free apples.



Wu Tang cont.

Gasche

In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight Masta Killa and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.

Hystrix

In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight Method Man and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.

Lecher

In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight O' Dirty and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.

Xin

In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight Inspecta Deck and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.

1. Otis

In the Versus Mode Character Selection Screen, highlight Ghooface Killah and hold the Select button. With Select held, press the X button.

GAME BOY

Babe and Friends

Level Passwords

2 Go into the Options and enter these passwords with the B button.



Babe cont.

Level 2: BoB

Level 3: RN6

Level 4: G5M

Level 5: RM1

Level 6: N6W

Level 7: TYQ

Ghosts 'N Goblins

Last Level Password

2 From the Main Menu, move down to password and enter the following code to get to the last level and face the last level boss.

3 Final Boss:

NBC(Heart Icon)K40N

Boarder Zone

Hidden Time Track

From the Main Menu, enter the Options Screen. Highlight and access the Password option. Now put in your password as: 020977. The screen should tell you that you've opened a new level. Now go into Challenge Mode and access the Time option. After selecting your



Boarder Zone cont.

board and rider, move Left on the Course Select Screen and you will be able to

1 access the hidden 4th track.

NEO-GEO POCKET

Puyo Pop

Special Custom Option

On the Mode Select Screen, highlight and choose Option by pressing and holding the A+B buttons simultaneously. Hold these buttons until you see the Option Mode Screen appear. Now move down to Game Setting and press A or B. On the Game Setting Screen, choose Custom and press A or B. On the Custom Screen, you will see a new option called Special Custom. Now you can choose Person 0 to play a smart computer vs. computer matchup, change the computer's method of dropping blocks, and have 2P mode available without a linked up opponent by using the option Connected Mode Off.

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We want your tricks! We want to include your best codes and tricks in every issue, to include with all our great tricks we pack in every issue. You can even win prizes if we pick yours as Trick of the Month! *see page 45 for contest rules



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FINAL WORD

What's the deal with the X-Box?



Craig Kawawa



Chris Johnston



Greg Sewart



Jim Cordano



Crispin Boyer

Kraig: There's little doubt that Microsoft's X-Box is going to do a lot for the games industry. Not only is it going to legitimize gaming even further (a process begun when Sony jumped into the industry with PlayStation) by adding yet another "mainstream" company to the mix, it's also going to further invigorate competition with what looks to be a quality product that's to be taken seriously. Whether or not it becomes more than a stable platform for PC ports remains to be seen, but quite frankly, PC gaming is in so sad a state that I would welcome

"...if X-Box is going to be a case where PC developers...shovel their crap onto X-Box, it'll fail."

some sort of box that standardizes and stabilizes the games. And that Box might as well have an "X" etched on its lid.

Chris: I have to say that I was quite impressed by the demos of X-Box shown at GDC. If that's what the games will actually look like, then I can't wait to play 'em (as long as they're made by talented and trusted developers). I think you hit the nail on the head when you say that PC gaming is in a sad state, and I believe it's in such a state because 90% of the games are overpriced garbage. But if X-Box is going to be a case where PC developers think they can shovel their crap onto X-Box just to make a tidy profit, it'll fail. It's good to see Microsoft taking a very console attitude and downplaying the fact that it'll be a PC port machine. The real question for me is, will Japanese developers support it? Because in my mind, without the support of Japan (and not just on paper, but in practice—there's a difference, remember that Namco was supposed to make CyberSled for the Saturn?) the X-Box will drown in a sea of first-person shooters and cookie-cutter games.

Greg: Yeah, the whole "easy PC port" aspect is both a blessing and a curse if you ask me. Too much shovelware will flood the X-Box library almost immediately if there's no quality control. The other problem I see is that the PC hardware industry is always moving forward at a fevered pace, something the console industry just doesn't cater to. Sure, when the X-Box comes out the PC parts will come fast and look gorgeous, but what happens when PC hardware gets so advanced that quick and dirty ports are

no longer possible on the console? Will all those PC companies even bother supporting the machine anymore?

Kraig: Microsoft is going to put a system in place to "regulate" the garbage, but as we all know from past experiences, plenty of crap will make it onto store shelves. There are a lot of great PC games out there, and there would be a lot more if they weren't drugged down by the hellskeller PC architecture. I think we all know that X-Box will be more than PC ports, but I also think that Microsoft's lineage will welcome more of them than

ever, but we shouldn't necessarily be afraid of that. After all, Microsoft seems to have things together as they are already gaming Japanese developer support. As for the PC market overtaking X-Box, everything progresses, but as long as there are lots of X-Box units out there, the software will continue to flow. For example, don't expect PS1 games to dry up anytime soon after the PS2 launches. **Chris:** Well, just remember that 3DO had 300+ licenses when it hit shelves...some of them Japanese developers (that never ended up making games or just threw together token games). X-Box can have all the Japanese developers signed up—still wouldn't mean they'd make a game for it. **Jim:** I think as long as they have some solid mah jong and horse racing titles, it can't lose. Throw in a couple dating sims, a good chess fighter and a pachinco game or two, and we could be talking PlayStation killer.

Crispin: Don't worry, Jim. If it's dating sims you want, it's dating sims you'll get. Seriously, I'm just really impressed by the X-Box hardware. Developers are gonna love this thing. It's got straightforward PC guts, it's got plenty of RAM (probably even more by the time Microsoft's finally done designing the thing), and it's got a built-in hard drive. That drive is a keen advantage, since developers will be able to use it to spool textures into the RAM. So we won't just see high poly counts; we'll see photorealistic textures, too. Sure, Sony will release a hard drive for the PS2 built into the ethernet adapter, but developers won't want to make games that require the hard drive, since not everybody will buy one.

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- EARTH - X EMPTY - V
- WORLD - U WATER - T
- SPACE - W COAST - A
- HAPPY - O FIELD - B
- SHARE - Z BLADE - D

DIRECTIONS

Fill in the puzzle with the correct words going across. Transfer each word's corresponding letter to the line at the end. This should spell the secret word going down.
HINT Read the secret word clue

		T		
H				
B	L	A	D	E
		S		
			L	

SECRET WORD ↓

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NEXT MONTH

July 2000

On sale June 6

E3 EXTRAVAGANZA

What will this year's E3 have in store for us? What does Sony have up their sleeve? A new Spyro, perhaps? Or a new Crash? We know you can't hardly wait to find out, so next month's EGM reveals some of the games on hand at the **Electronic Entertainment Expo**. Don't miss this early look at the latest and greatest for **Dreamcast**, **PlayStation2**, **Nintendo 64**, and **Game Boy Color**.



Tony Hawk makes his way to the OC with loads of new features.



With all the new systems on the horizon, expect lots of surprises at this year's E3 held in May in L.A. It's where the biggest and best demo their latest games and hardware. EGM's going to be there to bring you the scoop!

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

- **The Hottest E3 Games—Previewed Here!**
- **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater Reviewed for Dreamcast**
- **Grand Theft Auto 2 Previewed for Dreamcast**
- **The Latest Tricks for all systems**
- **News hot off the wire from E3 in L.A.**
- **Plus win cool prizes in the Tricks and Letters sections!**

Official PlayStation Magazine

June 2000

On sale May 16

Demo Disc

Playables

- **X-Men: Mutant Academy**
- **Deception III: Dark Delusion**
- **WWF SmackDown!**
- **Grind Session**
- **Gauntlet Legends**
- **Threads of Fate**

Non Playables

- **Legend of Dragoon**
- **Vanishing Point**

X-Men

OPW is blowing out everything you ever wanted to know about everyone's favorite mutants, the X-Men. They'll cover the film, the TV series, the toys, the spin-offs and a little game called **X-Men: Mutant Academy**. They've even got a playable demo on the disc! Also, check out previews of the latest PlayStation and PS2 games; see reviews of top games like **Jedi Power Battles**, **Wild ARMS 2** and **Vagrant Story**; plus more playable demos of **WWF SmackDown!** and **Gauntlet Legends**.

EXPERT GAMER

June 2000

On sale May 23

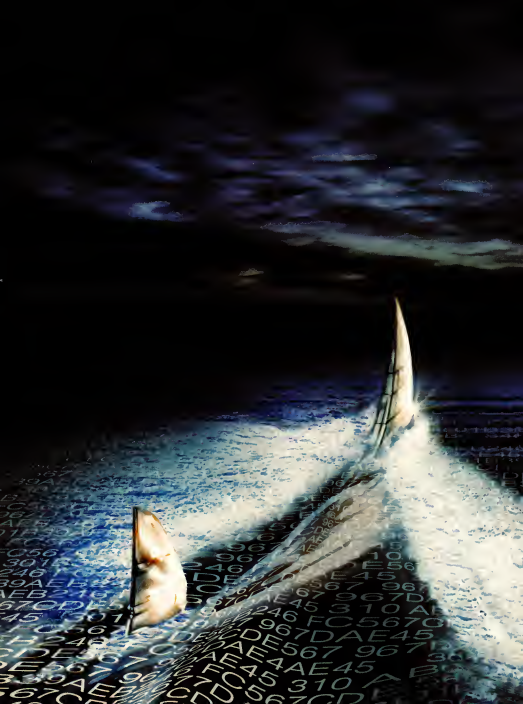
Perfect Dark

More **Perfect Dark** you say? You'll see tons of **Perfect Dark** tips in our magazine in the months to come, so don't miss out. The criminal mischief of **Grand Theft Auto 2** should keep you busy; and when you see how it looks on the Dreamcast, you won't want to miss **Excitebike 64**. The NES classic gets an N64 makeover. Also, check out **Grind Session**, **Wild Arms 2** and **Toy Story 2**.



- **Perfect Dark**
- **Grind Session moves and tricks**
- **Wild Arms 2 walk-through**
- **Toy Story 2 guide**
- **Excitebike 64 motorcycle mayhem**
- **Grand Theft Auto 2 for the Dreamcast**

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